

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

TRANSCRIPT OF THE
SANDY HOOK PUBLIC MEETING
APRIL 20, 2002

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 GREG: Carl, and next up in back of
2 Carl is Gordon Bishop.

3 Gordon, if you would come and get cued
4 up in back. Thanks.

5 Yes, sir.

6 MR. DE FILIPIS: Good afternoon, ladies
7 and gentlemen. My name is Carl DeFilipis
8 (phonetic), and I reside in West Caldwell, New
9 Jersey, which is approximately 60 miles away from
10 here.

11 I am not a park ranger, I'm a
12 volunteer. I saw some of you over at the mule
13 barn.

14 Why am I in favor of this proposal?
15 Obviously, as a volunteer who might be working a
16 few days in a row, it would give me a place to
17 stay overnight, but there are many other reasons
18 which apply not only to me, but to everyone in
19 this room.

20 The fisherman and bird watchers on a
21 cold winter day might desire a warm building and a
22 hot cup of coffee or tea.

23 A group of young mothers might say
24 let's meet at Sandy Hook for lunch. Local
25 chambers of commerce, garden clubs, senior citizen

1 groups might hold their monthly meetings on Sandy
2 Hook.

3 A local individual taking a course on
4 Sandy Hook could avoid a long drive elsewhere for
5 the same course.

6 What about a relative with young
7 children living in Kansas and who have never seen
8 the ocean? What a lifelong treasurer they would
9 acquire by staying at a bed and breakfast on Sandy
10 Hook.

11 With the restored historical buildings,
12 Monmouth area residents will have, perhaps, the
13 most beautiful historical site in the State of New
14 Jersey and beyond.

15 And the proposal would save the
16 taxpayers money and provide funds for other
17 environmental park projects.

18 At railroad crossings there is a sign
19 which says stop, look, and listen. Please stop
20 and think.

21 For example, the U.S. Army at Fort
22 Hancock built recreational buildings for the
23 morale of their shoulders. Beautifully restored,
24 useful buildings will be met with great
25 enthusiasm.

1 Please look. Look at the building 20,
2 the magnificently restored New Jersey Audobon
3 Society's home. It shows what a partnership can
4 and will do.

5 And listen. Each group should listen
6 to the other group.

7 None of us have all the answers.

8 If we all have an open mind, an amiable
9 accord can be reached.

10 And please have an open heart for the
11 people who are not here today. Who are they? Our
12 children and our grandchildren. What do you want
13 for them? Is the park proposal perfect and free
14 of error? Of course not. I have always said that
15 if I had a nickel for every mistake I made in my
16 life I would be a multimillionaire.

17 No one is perfect. Even the sun has
18 spots. But let it shine down on a new and
19 refurbished Sandy Hook.

20 Thank you very much.

21 GREG: Thank you, Carl.

22 (Applause.)

23 GREG: Following Mr. Bishop, we have
24 Brian McAndrew is up on deck after Mr. Bishop.
25 Gordon.

1 MR. BISHOP: Hi, Greg. Good to see you
2 again.

3 A little background for those who
4 didn't read the Star Ledger. For 27 years I
5 served there as the environment editor and
6 columnist. I am currently a syndicated columnist
7 in about a dozen or so publications in New Jersey,
8 and author of seven books on New Jersey.

9 I think the restoration of Fort
10 Monmouth is long overdue. The public/private
11 partnership between the Sandy Hook unit of the
12 Gateway National Recreation Area, and the Sandy
13 Hook Partners of Red Bank is the best approach for
14 saving Sandy Hook from further deterioration and
15 ultimate ruin.

16 Back in 1972/'73, I reported for the
17 Star Ledger on the transition of Sandy Hook from a
18 state park to a national park. I wrote dozens of
19 editorials, columns and page 1 articles about the
20 Gateway National Recreation Area. In fact, my
21 current book, my latest book is called "Gateway to
22 America." It's the first document to document the
23 history of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island,
24 Liberty State Park, and the national recreation
25 area, including Sandy Hook.

1 It is important background for
2 credibility, and I just want to get this on the
3 record, as a recipient of the National Land Use
4 Planning Award, the New Jersey State Planning
5 Award and the Monmouth County Planning Award, I
6 strongly support this timely project to save an
7 irreplaceable national historic landmark, which is
8 what Sandy Hook and what Fort Monmouth -- Fort
9 Hancock are. I live near Fort Monmouth in
10 Eatontown.

11 Fort Hancock and Sandy Hook, with its
12 oldest continuing lighthouse in America, reflects
13 both the history of New Jersey and this great
14 republic of America, through both war and peace.
15 We go back to colonial times when there wasn't a
16 U.S.A.

17 Fort Hancock is an integral component
18 of the fabled Gateway to America. The New
19 York/New Jersey Harbor, site of the inauguration
20 of our nation's first president, George
21 Washington, in lower Manhattan on the Hudson River
22 waterfront, shared by New York and New Jersey.

23 I commend the Gateway National
24 Recreation Unit at Sandy Hook for preserving this
25 unique historic treasure for future generations to

1 enjoy in New Jersey, America, and visitors from
2 throughout the world.

3 Coincidentally, the research I did at
4 the National Marine Laboratories, right here at
5 Sandy Hook back in 1971, led to a five-part page
6 one series published in the Star Ledger, winning
7 me a Pulitzer finalist that year. I did a lot of
8 my homework and research here, including at Fort
9 Hancock, and I wouldn't want to see this place
10 desecrated or decimated by anyone or anything.

11 I think this partnership is in the
12 public interest and we should all try to learn
13 what they are trying to do before we criticize and
14 condemn them.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Bishop.

18 After Mr. McAndrew, we have Paul Kahler
19 up next. Mr. Kahler.

20 Mr. McAndrew.

21 MR. MC ANDREW: Superintendent Wilson, I
22 wish to thank you and the National Park System for
23 giving me this opportunity to come here and
24 endorse the rehabilitation of Sandy Hook. My name
25 is again Brian McAndrew.

1 I have been a lifetime resident of
2 Monmouth County, and I am presently the
3 Superintendent of the Monmouth County Vocational
4 School District.

5 What I would like to do is take my
6 couple of minutes to give you an example of what
7 can actually take place out here at Gateway
8 National Park, and particularly Sandy Hook, and
9 that is the Marine Academy of Science and
10 Technology.

11 Monmouth County Vocational School
12 District is the district that is responsible for
13 the rehabilitation of almost 14 facilities out
14 here at Gateway National Park to turn it into
15 probably, I believe, the only public high school
16 on any national park in our country. So it is
17 home for school for four years for approximately
18 260 students.

19 What we have done, and what the Board
20 of Education of the Monmouth County Vocational
21 School District, in conjunction with the Board of
22 Chosen Freeholders was, over a period of 20 years,
23 put approximately 7 to \$10 million in the capital
24 infrastructure of rehabilitating these buildings.

25 Unfortunately, there are not, including

1 the park system itself, not had the ability to
2 have both priority and resources available in
3 order to do the types of things that we did. So
4 there are very few organizations that were able to
5 literally take latrines, horse barracks, because
6 that's what we took, and turn them into
7 state-of-the-art classrooms for these young
8 people.

9 So it can be done, and it can be done
10 with the proper supervision and proper plan.

11 I believe that over the past 20 years
12 that I have worked with the park system, what I
13 have seen, and I've worked with close to probably
14 five superintendents and five administrations,
15 what they have all had is dedication to the
16 preservation of the Gateway National Park system.

17 These gentlemen, I don't know if any of
18 you realize it or not, they come and go by almost
19 requirement, and about every five years we have
20 new administrations come here. And what is unique
21 about each and every one of these folks is that
22 they are dedicated to the preservation of their
23 park systems.

24 So I have full trust in the park
25 system, knowing what they put Monmouth county

1 Vocational School District through to do the
2 rehabilitation of these facilities, that they are
3 going to take the same care and watchful eye to
4 make sure that we are all going to be very proud
5 of Sandy Hook for the next generations to
6 literally enjoy and appreciate for generations to
7 come.

8 I thank you very much, and I certainly
9 endorse what we are about to discuss today.

10 (Applause.)

11 GREG: Thank you, Mr. McAndrew.

12 Mr. Kahler, we have Jim Wassel up next
13 after Mr. Kahler.

14 MR. KAHLER: My name is Paul Kahler.
15 Some of you know me as the vice president and
16 trustee of the Sandy Hook Foundation. Others of
17 you know me as an educator. I am retired after 35
18 years, 20 of those teaching cultural and religious
19 history at various colleges and universities,
20 ended my career in development at Monmouth, then
21 college, and now proudly university.

22 I am a resident of Highlands. My
23 interest in Sandy Hook goes back to my moving here
24 from New Mexico where I worked with the park
25 service on various projects, as well, in 1983.

1 For the last 10 years, I've worked on a
2 variety of projects on Sandy Hook, conservation,
3 environmental, and my great love, historical
4 preservation.

5 As a matter of fact, we are in this
6 theater only because the sandy -- the nonprofit
7 Sandy Hook Foundation raised the money to make it
8 usable again for outside groups, as well as our
9 local high school group.

10 We are currently trying to raise -- we
11 are raising a half million dollars to rehabilitate
12 the lighthouse keeper's cottage, because the
13 federal government does not have or will not
14 provide the money for that rehabilitation.

15 So my good faith in Sandy Hook, I hope
16 some of you know.

17 I have worked with superintendents here
18 for the last 12 years, and as the previous speaker
19 said, they have been competent, they have served
20 this place well, and particularly the last -- the
21 current administration, and the one before that,
22 in planning this project for Fort Hancock, has
23 impressed me greatly.

24 And I have studied it as an educator.
25 I went with one of the superintendents to San

1 Francisco to see a similar project, to find out
2 how this private sector/government collaboration
3 really works.

4 And it does work. And it is in the
5 tradition of the best of American history, and
6 American ingenuity, to do those things that need
7 to be done with the cooperation of private and
8 government funds.

9 And that's what we are about, and I
10 want to urge you to think hard and long about the
11 hallowed ground, and it is hallowed, that is Fort
12 Hancock.

13 One of the opponents of the project has
14 stated that there is no historical significance.

15 GREG: Excuse me, Mr. Kahler. You need
16 to wrap up.

17 MR. KAHLER: Okay. There is no
18 historical significance here. I ask you to read
19 this brochure, and then go back to Henry Hudson
20 sailing up on the Half Moon and the first sighting
21 of Sandy Hook.

22 Thank you.

23 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Kahler.

24 (Applause.)

25 GREG: After Mr. Wassel we have Joe

1 DeFiglia. Mr. DeFiglia.

2 Mr. Wassel.

3 MR. WASSEL: Thank you. My name is Jim
4 Wassel, and I am the President of Sandy Hook
5 Partners.

6 I wanted to take a moment today to talk
7 to you and to tell you why I have become
8 interested in Sandy Hook.

9 My wife Julie and my five children
10 moved here about five years ago, and we are
11 lifelong residents of the State of New Jersey,
12 early on up in Bergen County.

13 After moving here, and having such a
14 big part of our life be about the beach and always
15 trying to every weekend get to the beach, it was
16 one of the principal reasons why we relocated
17 here.

18 My nine-year old daughter, soon to be
19 ten, was four when we moved here, and she and I
20 would spend time walking the sea wall. We used to
21 call it walk the rocks. And it was during one of
22 our walks on the rocks that I bumped into the then
23 superintendent of the National Park, Chuck
24 Berling, and we got talking, exchanged
25 pleasantries, and found out -- and started to talk

1 a little about what we do, and when I found out he
2 was Superintendent, and he asked what I do, and I
3 told him a little bit about my past history at the
4 Roust Company, and the redevelopments I have been
5 part of, he said you ought to come talk to us, and
6 that was the beginning over four years ago of our
7 interest in this project.

8 After spending nine years teaching and
9 coaching up in Bergen County, I went into the real
10 estate business, and spent many years with the
11 Roust Company, and I was very fortunate to be part
12 of projects like Thaniel Hall (phonetic) in
13 Boston, and part of the development and the
14 management of the South Street Seaport in
15 Manhattan, Tabor Center in Denver, and the St.
16 Louis Train Station in St. Louis.

17 And they all required a respect to
18 their specific environments, they required a
19 respect to their specific communities, and they
20 required a historic and a cultural interpretation
21 that all made those projects very special projects
22 and important to their environments.

23 My company is made up of 80
24 professionals, all dedicated, and it is a
25 consortium by the way, and they are all dedicated

1 to the rehabilitation and the sensitive adaptive
2 reuse of historic properties around the country.
3 And those kinds of interpretations have the lowest
4 impact on their surroundings.

5 Our plans at Sandy Hook, partnering
6 with the Park Service, and hopefully with the
7 other park partners, will be focused around marine
8 and maritime research and education, celebrate the
9 history of this great place, develop a hospitality
10 component that provides our tenants and visitors
11 and researchers and educators and guests first
12 class facilities for meetings, classrooms, food
13 service and lodging, create a state-of-the-art
14 life-style office component, continue the work of
15 the Sandy Hook Foundation in support of the
16 cultural arts and education, and create a total
17 environment that celebrates the quality of this
18 great place, and the pride of the State of New
19 Jersey.

20 Thank you very much.

21 (Applause.)

22 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Wassel.

23 Mr. DeFiglia is here now, and Cici
24 Donovan is next up after Mr. DeFiglia.

25 How do you pronounce that?

1 MR. DE FIGLIA: Joe DeFiglia.

2 GREG: See I got it right.

3 MR. DE FIGLIA: Close. My name is Joe
4 DeFiglia, and I have been a Monmouth country
5 resident for almost 16 years now.

6 I am an avid runner and fisherman. I
7 can honestly say I probably spend about 12 months
8 out of the year, from January through December,
9 out here at the Hook, both doing road work,
10 running in races, fishing with my boys here in the
11 rip.

12 After weighing the pros and cons over
13 the past couple of years, I have come to the
14 conclusion myself that I think the restoration of
15 the Fort is absolutely necessary. I think the
16 vision of Jim Wassel and the Park Service is
17 exciting, and also economically viable.

18 Regarding the historic significance of
19 the Fort, a lot of the people have been
20 questioning this, and what I have to say there is
21 that, in this day and age, where we are defending
22 our freedom and the American way of life, the
23 historic significance of Fort Hancock, which is
24 the last defense of New York Harbor and the Jersey
25 shore, has never been more apparent, and I fully

1 support the Park Service's plan and have the
2 highest confidence in Jim and the Sandy Hook
3 Partners.

4 Thank you.

5 GREG: Thank you, sir.

6 (Applause.)

7 GREG: After Cici Donovan, we have Andy
8 Davey, I believe is next. Andy Davey after Cici.
9 Go ahead.

10 MS. DONOVAN: My name is Cici Donovan,
11 and I am the Director of the Sandy Hook Childcare
12 Center. We have been on Sandy Hook for 23 years.
13 We are nonprofit.

14 I give my full support for this
15 project.

16 Like many people, I had many
17 reservations about how such a large project would
18 come about, but with talking to the Park Service,
19 Richard, Russ, anyone who I stopped, they were
20 all -- all put any concerns I had to rest.

21 So let these beautiful buildings that I
22 am lucky enough, I see them every day, it would be
23 criminal to let them fall apart. It would be
24 criminal.

25 Their features, their place in our

1 history make Fort Hancock and Sandy Hook unique.

2 We are very fortunate to have this
3 opportunity to preserve this instead of just
4 letting these buildings fall apart.

5 I have the utmost faith in the National
6 Park Service because I have to work with them
7 daily. They can be so frustrating, to have
8 historical paint and what I can plant and what I
9 can't plant and where I can plant it. But because
10 I know that they have such concern and respect for
11 the Fort, I'm assured that whatever happens they
12 are going to take care of Sandy Hook, respect the
13 historical integrity, respect the environment, and
14 I have the utmost faith, and I urge you all to
15 give support.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 GREG: Thank you Cici.

19 Apparently we don't have an Andy Davey,
20 or didn't -- Davis? No?

21 Well, we will skip over that.

22 Is there anybody named Andy that wants
23 to speak? We'll do that.

24 Okay. Well, we will skip over that and
25 maybe we will go now to Judith Coleman.

1 Judith, would you like to come up?

2 And following Mrs. Coleman will be
3 Judith McCabe. So Judith McCabe we have cued up
4 after Mrs. Coleman.

5 MRS. COLEMAN: Well, it is Judith
6 Stanley Coleman. I'm sorry. I always get
7 confused when you call me Coleman.

8 GREG: I wrote that down, too. I
9 didn't know if I was supposed to.

10 MRS. COLEMAN: And you served on the
11 board with me for saving a million acres of open
12 space under Governor Whitman; correct?

13 Anyway, I just want to say a few
14 things.

15 I've lived here all my life in Monmouth
16 County, so you can probably take everybody's years
17 that they said and put them together and that's
18 how long I've lived here.

19 My concerns are this: I am also
20 President of the Monmouth County Historical
21 Association, so I believe in the preservation of
22 history, but I do not believe in this at the
23 expense of conservation and saving open space.

24 I am fearful of commercial development.
25 I have also served as the Chairman of the

1 Middletown Planning Board. I have had to vote on
2 many things where I have had to hold my nose and
3 say yuck, but what really happens is that people
4 come in and they push a little commercial
5 development, then they come back and say we can't
6 make it work, we need more and we need more, and
7 that is my fear.

8 Right now we are going to review in
9 Middletown our master plan and try to limit our
10 density.

11 One of the things I am worried about is
12 how can you control the number of people that will
13 work in the building?

14 Maybe you have answers for that. I
15 can't figure it out, whether it is a
16 not-for-profit or whether it is a for-profit.

17 Already the number of not-for-profits
18 we have are quite large. I drove down to Long
19 Branch the other day at seven in the morning.
20 There were 50 some cars coming from Sandy Hook.
21 As they say, when buildings don't get the return,
22 they will come back, and we will have more and
23 more.

24 We know that the Park Service cannot
25 maintain the properties, and I understand that,

1 and believe you, I, as they say, am a historic
2 person. I have wandered around here, but I am
3 fearful of just putting more and more people in
4 there and more and more traffic and more and more
5 cars.

6 We have an example right here in our
7 state, Liberty Park is an example of privatization
8 that has gone amuck. The reason, the concept of
9 privatization doesn't always work, especially for
10 the National Park Service, is that it is dependent
11 on creating the types of businesses that can
12 guaranty a profit. That inevitably results in
13 sprawl, overcrowded conditions, and, in some
14 cases, amusement park settings.

15 Is that what we want for Sandy Hook?

16 I am really very concerned about the
17 development. As Will Rogers said, "Land, they
18 don't make it anymore." They do make buildings,
19 but they don't make land.

20 So I really would ask that, you know,
21 we look at this very carefully.

22 I respect Mr. Wassel. I am sure that
23 he is a very good developer, but he has always
24 been in development. Some of it is redevelopment,
25 but the two places he mentioned are very crowded.

1 People go there, but thousands and thousands of
2 people go there, and I don't know we can take
3 thousands and thousands more people here in
4 Monmouth County and in this area.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 GREG: We now have Judith McCabe, who
8 will be followed by Maureen Sweeney. Maureen
9 Sweeney. Maureen Sweeney will be up after Judith
10 McCabe.

11 MS. MC CABB: Good afternoon. I am
12 Chief Warrant Officer Judith McCabe. I am the
13 curator of the National Guard Militia Museum in
14 Sea Girt.

15 The museum is housed in a 1930's
16 building that was preserved as a museum. It was
17 initially the armory that was built on the
18 facility, and the rest of the 165 acres in Sea
19 Girt has been preserved over the years since 1885.

20 I would like to speak to you today a
21 little bit about my concerns, and that is the
22 support. I firmly support the initiatives taken
23 here at Fort Hancock.

24 Fort Hancock is unique in our history,
25 in our New Jersey history, and in our American

1 history.

2 It is a little bit of our history, it
3 is part of our historical genealogy.

4 We have, as families have genealogy,
5 historically we also have one in our state and in
6 our country.

7 I believe we, as individuals, and as a
8 country, and as a state, have a moral and a legal
9 responsibility for the stewardship for the
10 heritage of this country.

11 It is not just for us today or for our
12 children and grandchildren, but it is for
13 generations after we're gone.

14 We have the responsibility to preserve
15 a site, such as Sandy Hook, and Fort Hancock, in
16 particular, as we are speaking today.

17 The 140 acres here at Fort Hancock were
18 established to preserve and protect our freedom.
19 Our freedom has been tested lately, as you well
20 know, and in the word "freedom" is the word
21 "free." And you also know now that freedom is not
22 free. Nor is the preservation of historic sites,
23 whether it be military or private or public.

24 In a recent conversation with the
25 Secretary of the Army, it was pointed out to me

1 that partnerships is the way that the government
2 is going, because there are no funds available to
3 support historic sites. There's limited funding,
4 I really should say. I shouldn't say there aren't
5 any funds, but there is limited funding.

6 And with partnerships, such as they did
7 at the Brook Army Hospital, they find that the
8 site is preserved, and prior to that there is a
9 conservation plan established, and then the
10 preservation takes place.

11 And here at Sandy Hook and at Fort
12 Hancock, this is what we are attempting to do.

13 The Sandy Hook Partners, along with the
14 National Park Service, are under strict
15 regulations as to what can and cannot be done.

16 So to think that there is going to be
17 growth beyond what is existing here already, that
18 cannot happen because of the regulations.

19 I, as a museum director and curator in
20 the Army system of the United States, must follow
21 a 61-page regulation. That's how strict the
22 regulations are. And the same are here, also.

23 We cannot build anything beyond what's
24 here already. We are here just to preserve the
25 site as it is.

1 The concept of -- the idea of
2 conservation are those activities devoted to the
3 protection of a site where an object may be, if it
4 is a museum, for future -- for the future. It is
5 activities that are devoted to protect that site
6 or object from any further chemical or physical
7 deterioration.

8 Preservation or the activities that
9 actually take place to protect that site, and
10 let's say in this instance we will talk about the
11 row of housing here --

12 GREG: Excuse me, Judith. You need to
13 wrap it up.

14 MS. MC CABE: Okay.

15 -- from any further physical or
16 chemical deterioration.

17 So the fact that we have here a site
18 that can be preserved, a historic site that can be
19 preserved, it should be.

20 Thank you.

21 GREG: Thank you very much.

22 (Applause.)

23 GREG: As Maureen Sweeney steps up, we
24 have Alan Smith, I believe is next. After Maureen
25 Sweeney, Alan Smith.

1 Go ahead Maureen.

2 MS. SWEENEY: Brian Zakowski,
3 Superintendent of Henry Hudson, asked if I would
4 read his letter to Congressman Palone.

5 "Dear Congressman Palone: Sandy Hook's
6 beach-front property and peninsula have proudly
7 and markedly served this country over the years.
8 Prime locations, such as Sandy Hook, which were
9 once dedicated to the nations defense, have been
10 redesigned to best serve their local community.

11 "It is with this in mind that I am
12 writing this letter in support of the proposed
13 project by the Sandy Hook Partners LLC to
14 rehabilitate and return to active use the historic
15 site at Fort Hancock and Sandy Hook Proving
16 Ground.

17 "As Superintendent of Henry Hudson
18 Regional School District in Monmouth County, I
19 feel very fortunate to be in such close proximity
20 to the aforementioned area because of the learning
21 opportunities it has afforded the children of the
22 communities of Atlantic Highlands and Highlands.

23 "Henry Hudson has worked
24 collaboratively with the Sandy Hook Foundation, a
25 nonprofit friends group of the National Park

1 Service, to help restore and preserve the Post
2 Theater at Sandy Hook.

3 "Henry Hudson has students currently
4 working with the Park Service in a work-study
5 program collecting water samples as part of an
6 environmental study funded by the state, and our
7 music and theater departments have performed there
8 throughout the school year and summer.

9 "In addition, the Henry Hudson School
10 District has been grandfathered in the use of the
11 Post Theater, within the contracts between Sandy
12 Hook Partners LLC and the National Park Service.

13 "The contract between the Sandy Hook
14 Partners LLC and the National Park Service
15 provides for the preservation of the exterior
16 physical structures, while allowing for the
17 incorporation of modern decor and technological
18 updates within a business and educational and
19 recreational campus setting.

20 "This is a unique educational and
21 cultural opportunity for not only the school
22 district of Henry Hudson, but also school
23 districts throughout Monmouth County and the State
24 of New Jersey.

25 "In closing, I am respectfully asking

1 for your support for this win/win project that
2 will benefit the students and citizens of today
3 and tomorrow.

4 Sincerely, Brian Zakowski."

5 Thank you.

6 As mentioned before, I am Maureen
7 Sweeney, and I have been directing the place at
8 Henry Hudson.

9 The students you saw in the lobby are a
10 few of our drama and theater management class
11 students.

12 Last year, thanks to a grant from the
13 Sandy Hook Foundation, the Charles Edison
14 Foundation, we created our first annual Edison Day
15 where we entertained and informed over 500
16 students.

17 We provided them with a performance of
18 the musical The Electric Sunshine Man, a walk to
19 the lighthouse and story, and they performed and
20 acted in theater games right out there in the
21 quad.

22 Thanks to the collaboration we have
23 with the Sandy Hook Foundation and the National
24 Park Service, with people like Honey Weathersby
25 and Lou Hanson and Lou Benuto, and, of course,

1 Russ Wilson, this year we plan to do the same on
2 May 30.

3 This project must go forward. Without
4 the refurbishing of these buildings and theater,
5 not only will Henry Hudson lose a wonderful
6 theater, but we will not be able to provide this
7 program and all the other great programs they
8 sponsor students and families of Monmouth county.

9 Please help us keep this important part
10 of Monmouth County's history.

11 Thank you for your time.

12 (Applause.)

13 GREG: Thank you.

14 After Mr. Smith, we have Michael
15 Weinstein. Coming up after Mr. Smith, Michael.

16 MR. SMITH: Good afternoon. My name is
17 Dale Smith, and I am a member of the New Jersey
18 Lighthouse Society. I am the volunteer
19 coordinator for the folks that you see at the
20 Sandy Hook Lighthouse.

21 We give the tours there at the request
22 of the National Park Service. We are very happy
23 and very proud to be part of this park. We may
24 not realize it, but the history of this park,
25 although it may not have been a park at the time,

1 goes back as far as 1764, and we are very happy to
2 be part of that.

3 We have been told about this project
4 and have been, maybe I shouldn't use the word
5 privy, but we have had information about this
6 project ongoing since the time that we started
7 here six years ago, and we have members in our
8 group who live as close as Highlands and Leonardo,
9 and people who live as far away as Morris County
10 and also Camden County.

11 For the most part, those people are
12 very excited about this project and about this
13 interaction of public and private enterprise to
14 get the park restored.

15 All of us are interested in history in
16 one form or another, other than that of the
17 lighthouse, and we are very anxious to see these
18 buildings restored. To allow them to deteriorate
19 in the way they have been over the years makes us
20 all very sad, and I am sure many of you feel the
21 same way.

22 So on behalf of the group, I would like
23 to ask you all to please support this project.
24 While it may not be perfect, at this point, with
25 the lack of public funds coming in to do the job,

1 the public/private organization being developed
2 here is probably the best saviour for Sandy Hook
3 and Fort Hancock.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Smith.

7 As Michael comes up to the podium, we
8 have Don and Cathy Gonner on next. I don't know
9 if they both get a minute and a half or whatever.
10 But go ahead, Michael.

11 MR. WEINSTEIN: Good afternoon. I am
12 Dr. Michael P. Weinstein, President and CEO of New
13 Jersey and Marine Science Consortium and Director
14 of the New Jersey Sea Grant College Program.

15 I have been a resident of Sandy Hook
16 for over 30 years, the consortiums and affiliation
17 of 26 colleges and universities in New Jersey and
18 the region, and as reflected in our mission, it is
19 NJMSC's business to conduct research, education
20 and outreach to foster wise use and development of
21 coastal resources.

22 Building sustainable coastal
23 communities is at the core of our activities, but
24 to be successful balanced uses and stewardship
25 must be at the very heart of any formula to

1 provide economic vitality and the quality of life
2 that underpins it.

3 I am here today to profess my full
4 support for the concept of adaptive reuse of Fort
5 Hancock. It is an exciting prospect that is long
6 overdue.

7 Although it seems strange to me at
8 least that the federal government finds itself in
9 the real estate business, it does not, however,
10 preclude their central role as stewards of public
11 lands and the public trust, and their
12 responsibility to conduct a full and rigorous
13 public debate on the issues, nor does it preclude
14 the need for a hard look, and I am using hard look
15 in NEFA terms, in adapting a maximally risk averse
16 approach.

17 We are dealing with priceless national
18 and cultural treasures, and everything possible
19 must be done to protect them.

20 Recently, the NJMSC has prepared
21 certain written statements that have appeared in
22 local and regional newspapers. Not surprisingly,
23 a few have excoriated the consortiums for
24 expressing its concerns about the proposed
25 redevelopment of Fort Hancock, and that's

1 understandable, given the whole -- the overall
2 process.

3 As this adaptive reuse project moves
4 forward, I reiterate some of the salient points of
5 our discussions with business leaders, legislators
6 and many public stakeholders, and I have four
7 bullets.

8 The mix of new uses should be retained
9 as two-thirds educational, cultural and
10 environmental. Space must be readily affordable
11 to academic and nonprofit institutions alike.

12 All members of the public should have
13 full access to Fort Hancock and its future
14 amenities, and access cost should be affordable.
15 The Hook should not be privatized nor gentrified
16 (sic.)

17 Parking, an already volatile matter,
18 must be center stage. Park officials should assure
19 the public that it has a virtually bulletproof
20 plan to address this issue.

21 Finally, a clear plan to protect
22 natural and cultural resources in the surrounding
23 environs should be promulgated, implemented and
24 enforced.

25 In summary, much excitement has been

1 generated by the prospect of a revitalized Fort
2 Hancock, but it would greatly benefit park
3 officials to promote full disclosure of plans for
4 these facilities and fully engage the public in
5 the environmental review process.

6 Only then will we have a consensus on
7 what is best for Sandy Hook and the people of New
8 Jersey.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 GREG: I am assuming this is Don Gonner
12 making his way to the front, and next on deck will
13 be William Tomlinson.

14 MR. GONNER: My name is Don Gonner. I
15 have been a resident of Monmouth County
16 practically all my life.

17 Sandy Hook, as far as I am concerned,
18 is sacred ground.

19 Most of my feelings here are emotional
20 rather than practical.

21 I know of all the needs. I have been
22 around a lot of the buildings. I have circulated
23 the area.

24 A couple concerns that I do have is the
25 traffic that will be generated. As Mrs. Coleman

1 said, now it is one thing; later, who knows what
2 it will be.

3 100 years is a long time, longer than
4 we have all been here, that's for sure.

5 I hesitate to tie up a federal property
6 with private funds in that length of time.

7 I think that it is going to create a
8 lot of traffic out here that wouldn't be here
9 otherwise.

10 I know the buildings have to be taken
11 care of. I don't have the answers.

12 Most of my education came from the
13 newspapers, and so I won't belabor anymore with
14 what some of the things that the people said that
15 I agree with, and I thank you for the time.

16 (Applause.)

17 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Gonner.

18 William Tomlinson is making his way to
19 the front, and Dick Pollack will be after Mr.
20 Tomlinson.

21 MR. TOMLINSON: Hello. Resident of
22 Jersey for 42 years, a plumber, and I live in
23 Hazlet, and, in the summertime, I am sure you know
24 coming down Highway 36, that's the start to the
25 gateway to the beach, and it's non-stop traffic.

1 It's horrible.

2 And, to this project, although it is
3 140 acres, the site, out of 1600, it will affect
4 -- this project will affect all of Sandy Hook.
5 Someone said it won't affect it, but it will,
6 because traffic is going to be tough.

7 You are bringing a ferry in, bed and
8 breakfasts. You know, I love the Fort. I have
9 been here a long time. I have taken my kids
10 through all the sites here. We fish, we hike, we
11 walk. We love it. And I am not so sure the Sandy
12 Hook Partners is the right thing for us, because
13 they are out to make money, bottom line, and maybe
14 the government should step up and do the right
15 thing and take care of this place rather than
16 commercialize it or bring in someone to make
17 money.

18 (Applause.)

19 The other day they saw a bald eagle out
20 here. You know? And a lot of other birds and
21 stuff like that. Maybe this is the place for
22 them, not us.

23 (Applause.)

24 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Tomlinson. Dick
25 Pollack was conveniently in the front row. After

1 Mr. Pollack, Judge James Coleman will be next.

2 MR. POLLACK: My name is Dick Pollack.

3 I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of
4 the communities YMCA out of Red Bank.

5 We were initially one of the first
6 responders to the original RFP put out by the Park
7 Service. We have a vested interest as a YMCA in
8 preserving one of the fine resources here at the
9 Hook, which is a YMCA which was erected in 1901 by
10 a gift of \$20,000 to build the building. And we
11 are excited about the fact that 100 years later we
12 may have the opportunity to restore the YMCA to
13 full use here at Fort Hancock.

14 Of course the YMCA was an armed
15 services organization for all those years,
16 providing sports, recreation and social activities
17 for the men and women stationed here at Fort
18 Hancock.

19 We had the privilege of working with
20 the members of the park staff. We had the
21 privilege of meeting Mr. Wassel and Mr. Duffy. We
22 were encouraged by the Park Service to withdraw
23 our initial proposal to do -- to redevelop the
24 YMCA separately, to work with the new
25 redevelopers, and we agreed to do that. And,

1 subsequently, we got to know Jim Wassel, Phil
2 Duffy, the members of the Park Service, and our
3 sense is that the adaptive uses are compatible,
4 that the YMCA as a recreational service can
5 provide expanded service to youth and families,
6 both here at the Hook and our neighboring
7 communities of Sea Bright and our bay shore towns
8 that have very few indoor recreation facilities
9 that we can provide.

10 So we have been encouraged by the -- by

11 the proposals that we have seen, and the YMCA is
12 hopeful that we can restore that building to
13 community usage, and also to provide in the
14 summertime additional expanded camping programs,
15 day camping programs that take advantage of the
16 resources here that are provided by the Marine
17 Science Consortium, our friends at the Mast, the
18 Park Service itself, providing programs for young
19 people, both our urban and suburban kids that
20 don't get to use this place as much as we would
21 like them to.

22 So we are encouraged by the approach
23 that's being taken, and we are in support of it.

24 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Pollack.

25 (Applause.)

1 GREG: After Judge Coleman, Dorothy
2 Guzzo is next up after the Judge. Judge.

3 JUDGE COLEMAN: Thank you, sir.

4 My name is James Coleman. You
5 previously heard from my wife, Judith Stanley
6 Coleman, and obviously I will not stand up here
7 and disagree with her. I have some common sense.

8 My remarks will be a little different.
9 I am not here to get your applause. I am here to
10 tell you how we have been treated to date by the
11 Park Service.

12 On March 15, my wife and I met with the
13 deputy superintendent about this project, and we
14 were handed a document called a letter of intent,
15 and the very first paragraph it says we are going
16 to (inaudible) it to attached lease, which is
17 attached. That means it's here. But it wasn't
18 there. And we raised that question. So the
19 Deputy Superintendent said we'll supply it for
20 you.

21 We waited two weeks. A good while
22 later, we met with the head of Gateway, Mr. Conig.
23 We again expressed our concern that we didn't have
24 the lease. He promised that he would supply it
25 for us.

1 After two weeks of conversation with
2 the Superintendent here, we were advised that
3 there was no lease, and we weren't entitled to it
4 anyway. We are now advised that any lease will be
5 entered into after the termination of this
6 hearing.

7 How are any of these people here going
8 to know what's going to be done?

9 Sandy Hook Partners and the Park
10 Service have been negotiating here for months.
11 They know what the lease is all about. Their
12 lawyers could draw it in one day. What's the big
13 secrecy? We are not building a high tech atomic
14 submarine. Tell the people.

15 All right. So you're forgiven, as far
16 as I am concerned, but I have a request. Continue
17 this hearing, then make available the lease. You
18 were kind enough to give it to Mr. Wells, and I
19 won't betray him. And after you have given it to
20 the public, made it public, continue the hearing,
21 hear the comments, then do whatever you are going
22 to do.

23 Now failing that, and you don't do
24 that, I can promise you we are going to seek the
25 assistance of the Court to prevent you from

1 entering into any agreement without full
2 disclosure to the public of what you are going to
3 do.

4 Thank you very much.

5 (Applause.)

6 GREG: After Dorothy Guzzo, we have
7 Jeff Applegate will be after Ms. Guzzo. Dorothy?

8 MS. GUZZO: I don't think this is going
9 to work anymore.

10 Hi. I'm Dorothy Guzzo. I am the
11 Administrator of the New Jersey Historic
12 Preservation Office.

13 I was invited out here today to come
14 and listen to all of your comments. I want to
15 thank the National Park Service for holding this
16 public meeting today, and also providing me a
17 great opportunity to come to the beach.

18 I work out of the Trenton office. I
19 don't get here that much.

20 The historic preservation office is in
21 the Division of Parks and Forestry and the
22 Department of Environmental Protection. We work
23 in partnership with the National Park Service.

24 We have been working with the National
25 Park Service on this project for a number of

1 years.

2 The office has been involved in a lot
3 of the discussions, as well as a lot of the
4 physical condition assessments of the buildings
5 themselves.

6 I just wanted to mention that this is a
7 historic site, it is listed on the national
8 register of historic places.

9 That means that the National Park
10 Service is subjected to the provisions in section
11 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

12 My office does perform the regulatory
13 function of that. We make sure that the National
14 Park Service is doing everything in accordance
15 with those standards.

16 So I just, I don't want to make anymore
17 comments than that, I won't take up my full three
18 minutes, but I wanted to let everybody know I was
19 here today, and I was listening to what all you
20 had to say.

21 Thank you.

22 GREG: Thank you.

23 (End of tape one.)

24 MR. APPLEGATE: ... here at the Hook.

25 I am trained as an architect, and I

1 specialize in code enforcement.

2 I interpret the building and
3 administrative codes for the State of New Jersey,
4 and I lecture on the rehabilitation sub code.

5 My work at the department, the
6 Department of Community Affairs, is in the
7 division of codes and standards, and I am attached
8 to the director's office of the division.

9 I am not speaking on behalf of the
10 department. I have to state that for reasons you
11 understand, I'm sure. I am speaking only on
12 behalf of myself.

13 Fort Hancock is a historical specialty.
14 It is unique. It is part of the United States
15 history.

16 Its preservation is very important to
17 all of us. Because this site is just a short
18 travel from the large population that inhabits the
19 New York metropolitan area, and because of the
20 many visitors that visit New York, who can also
21 come here, each of these persons has the right,
22 and it has the need to see this piece of U.S.
23 history.

24 For the last five years or so, I have
25 been around the park. And I have watched and gone

1 through many of the buildings and found that they
2 are structurally stable, and they are useful and
3 they can be rehabilitated.

4 New Jersey, a number of years ago,
5 developed the rehabilitation sub code, just to
6 address the need of older buildings.

7 I speak about the New Jersey code, not
8 because it has a great effect, it is your building
9 code.

10 I understand that the National Park
11 Service uses the local code from the community in
12 which it is in. Because of that, the New Jersey
13 code is the one that you will be using.

14 And just because a building has ceased
15 to be useful in its original intent does not mean
16 that it should be allowed to dwindle away and be
17 destroyed and lost forever.

18 Buildings like these that we have at
19 the Fort can be rehabilitated to a new use, which
20 is more appropriate for the new environment in
21 which it exists.

22 After the Army left, and the Park
23 Service took over, a number of the buildings
24 received new uses. The jail and the residence --
25 and a residence became museums. A number of the

1 barracks became educational centers and offices,
2 and now we discuss making the rest of the
3 buildings into a more appropriate use.

4 Because these buildings are
5 structurally stable --

6 GREG: You need to wrap up.

7 MR. APPLEGATE: Yes, I will. They
8 should not be lost.

9 Each of these will easily lend
10 themselves to a new use.

11 Please allow this to happen, allow the
12 codes to enforce and strengthen what we have here.

13 Thank you.

14 GREG: Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 Elaine Anderson. She snuck into the
17 front row, too.

18 George Moffet will be up after Elaine
19 Anderson.

20 Elaine.

21 MS. ANDERSON: I'm Elaine Anderson, a
22 40-year resident of Middletown, which Sandy Hook
23 is part of. Not everybody remembers that.

24 I've been a volunteer out here for a
25 number of years, first as a piping culver watcher,

1 but that got to be a little too much for me, and
2 the last couple of years as at History House.

3 I've also been seriously involved in
4 researching the history of Middletown, and I was
5 disturbed by reading one of the letters to the
6 editor that appeared recently on this matter, that
7 said that -- that the -- that the deed signed by
8 Thomas Jefferson, in the Hall of Records, forbade
9 having a tavern out here, or a place of public
10 entertainment.

11 So I've gone to the trouble to
12 transcribe that document, the agreement, it's not
13 a deed, although it is recorded in the deed book,
14 and the particular part that was only partially
15 quoted, and, therefore, it was misleading, said
16 that as long as there already was a tavern out
17 here, that an additional licensed inn couldn't be
18 started.

19 I have transcribed it. I won't read
20 the whole thing. It is three pages, and I brought
21 you a copy of the correct wording, but be assured
22 that it does not say that you can't have a place
23 of public entertainment on the Hook.

24 That's all.

25 (Applause.)

1 MS. ANDERSON: And I am in favor of
2 repairing the buildings. That's got to be done.

3 GREG: Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 GREG: After Mr. Moffet who is up,
6 Craig Letz will be up after Mr. Moffet.

7 MR. MOFFET: My apologies for my casual
8 appearance. I took my boat out of the water so it
9 wouldn't be damaged by winter storms and a tree
10 fell on it last night in my backyard.

11 Is there anybody here who objects to
12 restoring the buildings out at Sandy Hook? Please
13 raise your hand.

14 Okay. So we all agree on that.

15 The only problem that I am bringing to
16 the table today is that I don't believe that the
17 privatization of the National Park Service
18 facilities is the only way to go to restore our
19 buildings.

20 Now, I fault the National Park Service
21 administration, not your employees, sir, but your
22 administration. For 30 years, I have been coming
23 out here watching these buildings fall down
24 because the Park Service doesn't even have the
25 common sense to close a window, or bring down the

1 storms, or close a front door.

2 For a good 12 years, these buildings
3 were not maintained at all. They weren't even
4 painted.

5 Now, in the mid-1980s, they did come in
6 with a demonstration grant, and you know what they
7 did? They put plywood on the buildings. It took
8 them 12 years to figure that one out.

9 That's why we are at a stage today
10 where the only way we can restore these buildings
11 is what? To privatize our national park here at
12 Sandy Hook.

13 That, I think, is unacceptable.

14 The Park Service is pushing this
15 privatization because it is the only way they can
16 get out from underneath their own mismanagement of
17 the facility for the last 30 years.

18 Now, I have gone to previous --

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. MOFFET: -- superintendents and said
21 why don't you just paint the buildings, you could
22 do five a year. Oh, no. We don't have the budget
23 for that. Why not close the windows? I don't
24 have the budget for that.

25 Now last night when it rained, did we

1 all go around and close the windows in our homes
2 so the rain would not damage anything? We all
3 know that that's the way to preserve buildings.
4 Apparently, the National Park Service does not.

5 There is another villain here besides
6 the management of the National Park Service, and
7 that is the United States Congress.

8 For the last 20 years, conservative
9 (inaudible) in Congress, lower case C,
10 conservative elements on both sides of parties
11 have been starving the National Park Service.
12 There's no question about that. There's no
13 question about that. Your organization, or we as
14 taxpayers have been getting messed over for many,
15 many years, and that's why these facilities are
16 falling apart.

17 So now we have this classic situation
18 where how can the Park Service repair these
19 buildings? Privatization.

20 Now, the Park Service has told us that
21 they had previous public meetings on this. The
22 last public meeting where we could all get
23 together on this was 25 years ago. It's in their
24 environmental assessment plan. 25 years ago.

25 How many people here have the notes

1 from that meeting? Not one of you.

2 MR. VOICE: I didn't even know there
3 was one.

4 MR. MOFFET: What we need is more of
5 what's going on today. A full and open public
6 discussion of whether we really want to privatize
7 our parks. Then we have to look very carefully at
8 the individuals that come in and say, well, we can
9 do it for you. I have been hearing about the
10 Rouch corporation. I am in awe of the Rouch
11 corporation. But if you analyze --

12 GREG: Mr. Moffet, you need to wrap up.

13 MR. MOFFET: If you analyze what they've
14 been doing for the last five years, they build
15 very classy malls. They are not into historic
16 preservation.

17 We need public oversight of this
18 project. If war is too important to be carried
19 out by generals, the disposition of national park
20 properties is too important to be carried out only
21 by the National Park Service.

22 (Applause.)

23 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Moffet.

24 We now have Craig Letz, who will be
25 followed by Tom Gagliano.

1 MR. LETZ: My name is Craig Letz, and I
2 am a lifelong resident of Middletown, 42 years. I
3 have spent thousands of hours out here on Sandy
4 Hook. I have to say it is my favorite place on
5 the planet, bar none.

6 My son attends Mast here. He is out
7 here every day of the week.

8 I just love the place.

9 I have watched these buildings
10 deteriorate over the course of years. It is a
11 shame. Everyone in the -- everyone in this
12 building I know would agree with that.

13 I, for one, am very excited about the
14 possibility of somebody coming in here and taking
15 the initiative and the risk, 60 plus million
16 dollars Sandy Hook Partners is ready to spend on
17 these buildings. The government is not going to
18 write a check for that. That's a big risk. I
19 applaud these guys for that.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. LETZ: I have a unique perspective.
22 I've been in the real estate business for 18 years
23 in the development and consulting business. I did
24 have an opportunity to work with Phil Duffy and
25 Jim Wassel over the course of those years. They

1 are pros. They are great at what they do. They
2 listen to people. They don't make up their minds
3 and run in one direction. They listen. That's
4 why we all have an opportunity here today.

5 One thing that I noticed here today,
6 that I have to point out, is that everyone
7 volunteer -- everyone that works here at Sandy
8 Hook, all the volunteers that have gotten up and
9 spoke, the people who come here and work here
10 every day, the principal at Mast, the guy who is
11 in charge of the YMCA, people who know Sandy Hook
12 better than anyone here, they want to see this
13 happen. They know better than anyone.

14 The government is not going to come and
15 write a check to fix these buildings. We need
16 Sandy Hook Partners.

17 The last comment I want to make is, if
18 this project fails, Sandy Hook Partners invested
19 60 plus million dollars, they walk away from it,
20 we have buildings that have been rehabilitated for
21 future generations.

22 I thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Letz.

25 Following Senator Gagliano, we have

1 Carol Balmer, will be up after the Senator.

2 SENATOR GAGLIANO: Good afternoon,
3 ladies and gentlemen. My name is Tom Gagliano. I
4 am a former state Senator representing central
5 Monmouth County for many, many years, and most
6 recently the founder and president of the Jersey
7 Shore Partnership. I recently retired as
8 president, but I want to point out a couple of
9 things that have my interest in this project.

10 First of all, I am totally in favor of
11 it. I think it is a wonderful opportunity to save
12 Fort Hancock, and I think it is an opportunity
13 that we should absolutely take advantage of.

14 Several years ago, I was born here
15 almost -- maybe a little even before Judy Stanley,
16 I think. I have certainly been here a long time.

17 I can remember, as a youngster, how, on
18 the local radio stations and the local -- the
19 local newspapers would tell us during World War II
20 that they were going to have gunnery exercises out
21 here and not be concerned about the noise that we
22 would be hearing, and we did hear the noise, and
23 this has been a tremendous, tremendous place for
24 not only Monmouth County but for the entire
25 country.

1 It is something that must be preserved.

2 And the only way I think we can preserve it is
3 through this public private organization.

4 I am just going to give you one example
5 of why I think it will be done right.

6 Maybe more than one, but the first one
7 is the Jersey Shore Partnership each summer for
8 the past several years had an outing out here, we
9 called it Summer Celebration, and we had it in
10 June, and this past year we had it in connection
11 with Flag Day, and we named the event You're a
12 Grand Old Flag, and we had total cooperation with
13 the Park Service. Not only that, they hung out
14 the flag of the United States, which I guess is
15 one of the largest flags ever to fly over public
16 property, and they put it out that night, and this
17 was a couple of months before 9/11, and all I
18 could think about on 9/11 was how gracious and how
19 wonderful it was to have Fort Hancock here for a
20 public outing of some 500 people.

21 But, as we were getting ready to put up
22 the tent, I was with the superintendent, and we
23 had talked about electrical service out here, and
24 the electrical service is great, but, you know, we
25 were going to demand quite a bit of service

1 considering we had to do some cooking and we had
2 the band and the lights and all, and I just said,
3 well, Mr. Superintendent, we can trench, do a
4 little trench here and put a wire in there and
5 take care of this. He said, no, you won't put a
6 trench in there. And that was only for a small
7 wire. He said that would be against our
8 regulations. And so that is how they protect and
9 care for this wonderful place.

10 And I believe in them, and I believe
11 that over the course of the next few years, as
12 this property is redeveloped, that they will take
13 good care of it on behalf of the people of this
14 country, and we will be very, very proud to know
15 that this project has been completed.

16 So thank you very much, and all the
17 best to the Park Service and to Jim Wassel and his
18 people.

19 Thank you.

20 GREG: Thank you, Senator.

21 (Applause.)

22 GREG: After Carol Balmer, we have
23 Mayor Gregory Harquale will be up after Carol.

24 MS. BALMER: Carol Balmer, B-A-L-M-E-R.

25 My handwriting is not the best.

1 GREG: My handwriting is impeccable

2 so...

3 MR. BALMER: I have been listening to a
4 lot of comments. I used to be the Deputy Mayor of
5 Holmdel Township. I sat on the township
6 committee. I was the Holmdel Environmental Chair,
7 I was on the Planning Board, and I am currently
8 sitting on the Zoning Board. I have participated
9 in a lot of grass-roots organizations in Monmouth
10 County for a long time.

11 I have some basic concerns, especially
12 as a person who has really served in township
13 government.

14 The procedures tonight I question. I
15 am confused by the procedures.

16 I asked one of the forest rangers
17 outside how do I ask questions. He said, you
18 don't ask questions. You put them on paper. We
19 have comments first, then we ask questions.

20 When the application comes before a
21 municipal Planning Board or Zoning Board, they
22 have a professional engineer, a landscaper, soil
23 scientists. They have air and water experts.
24 They have all kinds of professionals testify.

25 Unfortunately, that was not the case

1 tonight. We don't have professionals here.
2 Therefore, we are limited in knowledge on what we
3 can comment on.

4 Before the Planning Board and Zoning
5 Board at the municipal level, they make a
6 presentation. The audience, the public is then
7 allowed to question the professionals, question
8 the presentations, any documents that were
9 submitted. This is not the case tonight.

10 I was concerned, I asked the park
11 ranger, I said, is there an EIS? They provided me
12 with an EIS for a cost of \$5. That's the
13 environmental impact statement.

14 I couldn't read through the whole thing
15 while I was here. I do have a lot of questions on
16 this, but I understand I can't make those
17 questions known now. I would have to do it in the
18 written comment period, I believe.

19 I am confused how long the written
20 comment period is, how long the time will be
21 extended for.

22 Judge Coleman was right on point
23 before. There has not been submitted enough
24 documentation for the public to review to
25 sufficiently comment on this.

1 In this EIS, I can't even find a list
2 of professionals that prepared this. I don't see
3 any professional engineers. I see Sandy Hook
4 Partners, I looked all through this, maybe I am
5 missing it, I don't see any professional
6 engineers, I see no soil scientists, I see no
7 water experts. I'm confused. Where are the
8 experts that provided this EIS?

9 I am not for or against this. I do
10 believe that the public is being shortchanged, and
11 because they are so anxious to have a good thing
12 done, they are putting the cart before the horse,
13 and, essentially, they will grab at any dollar to
14 get their cause accomplished, but at what cost
15 long run?

16 The buildings are important. The
17 environment out here is far more important.
18 Historical structures --

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. BALMER: Historical structures are
21 man-made. What nature makes is not renewable?
22 Once it's gone, it's gone forever.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. BALMER: I respectfully ask the Park
25 Service, and all the jurisdictional authorities,

1 to provide extended public comment period and to
2 provide the public with sufficient documents for
3 them to make an honest appraisal of the situation.

4 As I said, I am not for or against
5 this. I just don't have enough knowledge. I
6 don't have enough information, and I look to the
7 authorities to provide that for the public to
8 comment on.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 GREG: As the Mayor makes his way up,
12 Richard Anderson. Richard Anderson will be up
13 after the Mayor. Mayor.

14 MAYOR HARQUALE: Good afternoon,
15 everybody. My name is Gregory Harquale. I am the
16 Mayor of Sea Bright, which is just down the road a
17 piece. It is great to see such a good turn out of
18 all those interested parties, all those interested
19 people in Sandy Hook.

20 I am here to speak in favor of this
21 project.

22 I've lived in the area for over 35
23 years, and I have seen a lot of positive things
24 happen here at Sandy Hook. Unfortunately, they
25 have been overshadowed by the deterioration of

1 such historic buildings.

2 Many of you people have toured through
3 here in the open sessions where they had all the
4 older buildings, the decayed buildings available.
5 And I made that tour myself, and I saw some of
6 these very fine historic buildings in decrepid
7 shape, almost enough to make a grown person cry.

8 I think this project should go forward.
9 I think it's a timely project. The Park Service
10 has worked on doing something to improve and to
11 maintain the historic properties out here for many
12 years. This development project and the paperwork
13 and all that was put together for the RFPs have
14 taken a long time.

15 If this project now stops, it is going
16 to be a long time before we ramp up again and move
17 forward.

18 I think economically it is good for
19 Sandy Hook. I personally think economically it is
20 good for the communities, the surrounding area.

21 I think that this particular location,
22 as we all know, is owned by the people, it's for
23 the people, and we should maintain it so that
24 history is available for the generations to come.

25 I would like to see this project move

1 forward. I would like to see it completed, in my
2 lifetime, not in my grandchildren's lifetime.

3 Thank you very much, and I hope you
4 will all feel positive after this meeting. Thank
5 you.

6 GREG: Thank you, Mayor.

7 (Applause.)

8 GREG: As Mr. Anderson makes his way
9 up, after Mr. Anderson, we will have Commander
10 Thomas J. Gorman.

11 MR. ANDERSON: I am a long-time resident
12 of Monmouth County, and I, also, have a wife who
13 has spoken already, and I am not about to disagree
14 with her either, so I am in favor of this project.
15 It seems to be it's the one way we have to get
16 enough funding in order to be able to -- in order
17 to be able to save the buildings.

18 There are a lot of problems that are
19 involved. I don't even know if they actually
20 considered some of the magnitude of the problems.

21 I want to talk about one of the
22 problems, and that is parking.

23 We have a 300-seat auditorium here, and
24 there's space for 30 vehicles right outside. That
25 takes a lot of people in one vehicle to fill up

1 this building.

2 Across the street, right now, this is
3 full. Across the street, there's another 40 more
4 cars, and they are planning to cut that back to
5 four or five cars, vehicles.

6 Across the street the other way, across
7 whatever that street is, there's a -- out behind
8 some of those buildings, there's another 30 cars
9 parked out there. I don't know where the rest of
10 the people are parked, but they sure aren't parked
11 in legal parking spaces for the Park Service.

12 And putting three -- there's space for
13 three cars in each one of these officers'
14 buildings. You can't fill up 10 offices with
15 three cars full of people.

16 They tell me it is not too bad to walk
17 across, they are going to have some additional
18 parking on the east side of here, and you can walk
19 across the parade ground and come in, and that's
20 fine on a fine summer afternoon, spring afternoon,
21 but if it is raining a good deal harder today, it
22 would have been a very difficult walk. And in the
23 wintertime, it's people that like to work out here
24 that think that you can walk a half a mile in
25 order to get to your office. And they're

1 (inaudible) to put a jitney that goes around.
2 Now, that's a great idea. I hope it works. I
3 hope it provides facility for people to get to the
4 offices.

5 It seems to me that you've got more
6 problems getting people parked and into the
7 buildings to do the work that they are -- that
8 they're leasing the buildings.

9 I worry that they aren't going to lease
10 the buildings, that people won't lease the
11 buildings if they don't have any place to park
12 their cars.

13 There is one advantage to the parking
14 restriction, limited parking, or maybe there's
15 two. One of them is the limited demand for
16 parking may restrict the demand for buildings,
17 there may be a limited demand for buildings, and
18 that's bad, but on the other hand, it is going to
19 limit the number of people that can drive out
20 here, and that's going to at least be good in that
21 it won't -- it won't be excessive traffic. You
22 can't have more people driving out here than you
23 have a place to put the cars after they get here.

24 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Anderson.

25 (Applause.)

1 GREG: Following the Commander, Steven
2 Nolton will be up next.

3 COMMANDER GORMAN: Good afternoon. It's
4 always a pleasure to come back to Sandy Hook. I'm
5 Commander Tom Gorman, retired from the Navy.

6 When I retired from the naval service,
7 number one, I needed a job, and I was the founder
8 of the Marine Academy of Science and Technology.
9 Not an easy task.

10 (Applause.)

11 COMMANDER GORMAN: When I started the
12 project, the objections were insurmountable. I
13 almost threw in the towel many times. I was very
14 fortunate that the Army was still here. They kept
15 the heat on, the lights burning in building 24 and
16 25. If it wasn't for that, Mast wouldn't have
17 existed.

18 And Mast really was the only -- the
19 only place that you could put a project like Mast
20 in Monmouth or Ocean County was out here at Sandy
21 Hook. And, in my opinion, it is the perfect match
22 for the correct utilization of the environment.

23 Everything you are going to hear today
24 on objections I heard before, so it is worth
25 hanging in, believe me. You also have to

1 remember, I think everybody should realize this,
2 that the federal government doesn't have any
3 money, and look at the Department of the Navy.
4 One-third of their ships, one-third of their
5 ships, are manned by civilian mariners, and if the
6 Navy had the money, that third of the ships would
7 be manned by military personnel. So the
8 Department of the Defense has a lot more money
9 than the Department of Commerce.

10 Bear that in mind when you are thinking
11 about these objections.

12 Before you leave here, before you leave
13 here, I would advise you to drive down where the
14 Mast buildings are. And \$10,000 of private, or
15 rather county money, was put into those buildings.
16 And before the money was put in there, most of the
17 roofs were missing, there were no windows, there
18 were animals living in the buildings, there was
19 ivy growing in and out of the windows. They were
20 a disgrace. So by bringing in outside money, you
21 not only have a beautiful setup, but you also have
22 a wonderful marine environment and marine school.

23 So thank you very much, and I wish you
24 well.

25 Greg, good seeing you.

1 (Applause.)

2 GREG: Thank you, Commander.

3 After Mr. Nolton we will have Bill
4 Spencer will be after Mr. Nolton.

5 MR. NOLTON: Can you hear me?

6 Good. I am Steve Nolton and Chair of
7 the Jersey shore group of the Sierra Club. We are
8 members in our group are residents in Monmouth and
9 in Ocean Counties.

10 I've got a much longer statement than I
11 can possibly read in three minutes, so I will
12 enter the whole statement into the record, but
13 just cover a few comments.

14 We have some concerns about the
15 project. We are not saying don't go ahead, but we
16 think additional information is needed so we can
17 have some confidence in what's proposed.

18 As was mentioned before, there is a
19 problem, at least an information problem with the
20 parking situation. There's proposed to add an
21 additional 665 spaces to the immediate Fort
22 Hancock environs, and this disturbance and even
23 destruction of vegetation could have a major
24 impact on the wild wormwood population. Wild
25 wormwood is a small plant and grows about this

1 high, and it is present in -- it's rare in the
2 state, and it's present in a fairly large
3 population in the coal yard, at least where the
4 coal used to be stored, and additional population
5 of several hundred plants was found to the east
6 and another 60 plants were located in -- near
7 other proposed lots.

8 Is a parking lot for 76 cars and
9 parking for another 122 vehicles justification for
10 destruction of hundreds of rare plants? Are these
11 the only feasible locations for these parking
12 lots?

13 While we commend the proposed methods
14 of mitigation, which include transplantation of
15 existing plants and collection of seeds, we
16 strongly urge that the lot location and design be
17 completed in a way so as to minimize necessity for
18 these actions.

19 An additional concern regarding parking
20 is the increase in impervious cover, which will
21 lead to an increase in storm-water runoff into the
22 Sandy Hook Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, with a
23 concomitant increase in pollutants discharged to
24 the water.

25 We recommend use of porous and

1 permeable surfaces wherever possible and redesign
2 of the storm drainage system to include
3 filtration, separation components to remove oil
4 and other pollutants before the runoff is
5 discharged into the ecosystem.

6 The next concern that I wish to address
7 today is water use. Water is always a precious
8 resources, especially in times of drought, like we
9 are in today, the situation we are in today. And
10 the proper disposal of resultant waste water is
11 critical, as well.

12 The environmental assessment estimates
13 an additional 90,000 gallons of water per day will
14 be used and waste water treated. The report
15 states the plant, the sewerage treatment plant,
16 currently treats and discharges approximately
17 60,000 gallons per day during the winter and
18 110,000 gallons per day in the summer; but the
19 permitted effluent discharge limit is 189,000
20 gallons, and the treatment capacity is 200. If
21 90,000 gallons are added to the current daily
22 levels, not only will the discharge limit be
23 exceeded, but the maximum capacity of the plant
24 will also be reached.

25 How will these situations be resolved?

1 Will a new or amended application for a discharge
2 permit limit be submitted? Will changes to the
3 plant be made to increase the treatment capacity,
4 or will a new plant need to be built?

5 It is our recommendation that we also
6 consider water as much as possible, water
7 conservation methods out here in Sandy Hook.

8 We don't have any specific
9 recommendations. I am sure you are going to put
10 in low flow toilets.

11 GREG: You need to wrap up, Mr. Nolton.

12 MR. NOLTON: But certainly metering of
13 the buildings and charge to the tenants would be a
14 good way to limit use and make it cost -- charge
15 the cost back to people.

16 And I won't spend a lot of time on
17 traffic, but as one gentleman said, the -- there
18 is a problem already on Route 36, and this
19 particular project is going to cause additional
20 traffic. We need some studies. We need studies
21 such as come before the planning boards and the
22 towns surrounding here to determine whether there
23 will -- whether the roads will be able to handle
24 it and what the impact will be.

25 Thank you very much.

1 (Applause.)

2 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Nolton.

3 MR. SPENCER: My name is Bill Spencer.

4 I am a veteran of the Nike Missile Program. I
5 served in Orangeburg, New York from 1958 to 1961.

6 Now, for those who weren't familiar
7 with the Nike Missile Program, it was the first
8 surface-to-air missile deployment by the United
9 States during the beginning of the Cold War
10 period.

11 The interesting thing, and what I am
12 here to talk about today, is really the historical
13 significance of Fort Hancock.

14 The interesting thing about the Nike
15 site it was here at Fort Hancock, and about Fort
16 Hancock as well, was the first graduating class of
17 students that deployed the Nike missile system
18 came out of Fort Bliss, Texas. Those students,
19 upon completion of the school, came to Sandy Hook,
20 and that was the -- as a matter of fact, I even
21 have some pictures here for those of you who may
22 be interested in seeing them. The first Nike site
23 that was deployed in the United States, so I am
24 here to really support and speak on behalf of a
25 lot of other Nike vets, that we really would like

1 to see the Fort Hancock complex preserved.

2 Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Spencer.

5 We would like to take this opportunity
6 to welcome Congressman Frank Palone, who has
7 joined us. We are honored and pleased to have
8 him.

9 I will call on the Congressman.

10 CONGRESSMAN PALONE: Thank you very
11 much. I don't know. Is there a mike? Is that
12 the mike?

13 Right here. Okay.

14 First of all, I have to apologize for
15 being late. I know that the Park Service agreed
16 to have the hearing today, and I indicated to them
17 that I wasn't even sure I was going to be able to
18 come, because I had so many commitments before and
19 after, but I did manage to get here, and would I
20 briefly like to say a few things.

21 First of all, I want to thank them for
22 their response. I have been asking them over the
23 last few weeks to, first of all, have a public
24 hearing and to extend the comment period, which I
25 think has been extended to May 6 or so now.

1 In part because -- in part because I
2 think that people wanted the opportunity to speak.
3 I know that they had the open house a few weeks
4 ago, and I was here, and I think that was very
5 good, but I also feel it was important to have a
6 public hearing like the one you are having today.

7 And I had also asked that all the
8 documents, with regard to the 22 proposals, also
9 be released.

10 Now, I know it is their position, and
11 they probably already explained it, since I missed
12 the last hour or so -- okay. Well, their position
13 is that there's some privilege or privacy involved
14 with the contracts that were proposed. But what
15 they decided to do was to simply ask each of the
16 22 contractors, or those that put forward
17 proposals, to agree voluntarily to release the
18 information.

19 In other words, the privilege of the
20 protection is for those who have made the
21 proposals. So if they under the law decide that
22 they would like to release the documents, then
23 those documents are released, and they are
24 basically going around to each of those 22 asking
25 them to release the documents, and are hopeful, I

1 guess, that each of them will agree to do so.

2 I don't know for sure, but my
3 understanding is that Wassel has already agreed to
4 do that, and you are releasing those today, but
5 those actually haven't been given out yet. Right?
6 It is something that is going to be made public
7 today for people to look at.

8 But I imagine it will take some time
9 for somebody to look at it. How many pages?
10 Probably hundreds -- there you go. Okay.

11 Well, I don't know. You may have
12 gotten through all of this, so maybe I am just
13 repeating what is already out there, but that
14 document is being released today, and they are
15 going to make an effort, and they hope that every
16 one of the other 21 or so will be released within
17 the next few weeks.

18 Now, I realize that because it is just
19 being released today, and others are going to be
20 released later, that people are going to say how
21 can this be the definitive public hearing. So I
22 have also asked them if they would have another
23 public hearing after all those documents are
24 released, not just the Wassel one, but the others,
25 and they --

1 (Applause.)

2 CONGRESSMAN PALONE: You don't have to
3 applaud for me. I don't know if they said
4 definitively, but it is my understanding that that
5 will be forthcoming, and as soon as all the
6 documents are made available, that can be, we will
7 have another public hearing like this, hopefully.

8 I have previously stated, you know, my
9 position or concerns, I guess, about the proposal.
10 I do believe very strongly that these buildings
11 need to be reserved. I think that, when we look
12 at the historic nature of Fort Hancock and the
13 buildings, whether they were mostly of course for
14 military purposes, that they are of historic
15 significance and they must be preserved.

16 I think you know that the reason that
17 the Park Service has gone out and solicited
18 private proposals is because of the cost of
19 renovating and upgrading all of the buildings so
20 that they could just be used again is very
21 prohibitive. I am sure it is probably well over
22 \$100 million.

23 I don't have to tell everybody that
24 with the budget constraints that we have in
25 Congress, we have a tough enough time every year

1 just getting the money to operate Sandy Hook and
2 to get money to fix the infrastructure and
3 preserve as much as we can.

4 I mean, I could sit here and I could
5 tell you that we are going to be able to get \$100
6 million from the government to fix the buildings,
7 but we are not going to be able to, and that's the
8 problem.

9 So they are under an obligation -- they
10 actually are obliged to upgrade the buildings, and
11 that's why they are going out looking for private
12 proposals to do so.

13 My concern, of course, with the Wassel
14 proposal, or any proposal, is that it doesn't lead
15 to overdevelopment, to commercialization, and,
16 also, that the -- those who currently occupy the
17 buildings, whether it be non-profits like Clean
18 Ocean Action or the other educational functions,
19 the New Jersey Marine Science Consortium, the
20 Mast, or even the Noah Lab, which I believe
21 doesn't just have the lab but also uses some other
22 space, or at least used to, that they continue to
23 be able to operate, and that everything not just,
24 you know, become, or most of it become just a
25 hotel or a commercial enterprise or whatever.

1 And what the Park Service is saying is
2 that, in choosing the Wassel proposal, that they
3 have, you know -- they feel that it will not lead
4 to overcommercialization and that those other
5 educational, nonprofit government functions will
6 continue to be able to stay here.

7 I don't know if that's the case. I
8 think we need to look at it further, but I think
9 that they are certainly making the effort, and it
10 is our job to, you know, scrutinize the documents,
11 and whatever we get over the next few weeks and,
12 basically, again say whether we think that that
13 effort is achieved through this proposal.

14 I guess the only other thing that I did
15 want to say is that I also wanted to comment a
16 little bit about the traffic.

17 You know, we only have one road coming
18 in and out of Sandy Hook, and there is a
19 tremendous amount of traffic in the summer, you
20 know, in the two, three, four months of the
21 summer, and I am also concerned, not only about
22 commercialization, but, also, whether or not we
23 are going to be generated a lot more traffic, and
24 that just makes it even more difficult for those
25 who want to use the recreational aspects of Sandy

1 Hook to continue to be able to do so.

2 But let me just thank again the Park
3 Service for having the hearing, for pursuing this
4 disclosure of the documents. They know, I think,
5 and I certainly know, that everybody in Monmouth
6 County and throughout the state, or even beyond
7 the state, that uses Sandy Hook feels very
8 strongly about it. And it's no surprise to me
9 that there's so many people that show up on a day
10 like this to comment on it.

11 And I think we all feel very strongly
12 that we need to preserve Sandy Hook, primarily for
13 recreational, educational opportunities, and not
14 for, you know, commercial purposes; and,
15 hopefully, when this process is continued, that
16 will continue to be the case, and the commercial
17 element just becomes a small -- a relatively small
18 part of it.

19 So thank you again, and we will report
20 back about the next hearing and the documents as
21 they come forward.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 GREG: Thank you, Congressman.

25 I believe the next speaker is George, I

1 think it is Grant. George Grant?

2 Following Mr. Grant, I believe it is
3 Rider, Robert J. Rider.

4 George makes big Gs and Robert makes
5 big Rs, and they all commingled, and hopefully it
6 is Mr. Grant.

7 MR. GRANT: It is Mr. Grant.

8 I thank you for the time that you've
9 allotted me here.

10 I have just retired from the State of
11 New Jersey as of three weeks ago. I spent 18
12 years out here at Sandy Hook. I guess in
13 conjunction with Congressman Palone, I will take
14 some of the responsibility for building the marine
15 lab out here.

16 I've spent 18 years out here getting
17 things built, operating things once they were
18 built, and that follows an extensive career in
19 environmental planning, economic development.

20 I've worked on the original NEFA. I
21 set up the environmental quality board in Puerto
22 Rico. I am an economist, development planner,
23 military base reusing consultant, a whole variety
24 of things.

25 I have to say some very interesting and

1 great experiences happened to me here, and I think
2 solves a lot of problems out here.

3 I've worked with the Park Service very
4 closely. It took us 10 years after the fire in
5 1984 to get the new marine lab built out here, but
6 I think we managed to do something that was both
7 very significant for the scientific needs of the
8 state and the environment, and for the people of
9 New Jersey and for the other cohabitators of Sandy
10 Hook in developing a facility that responded to
11 everybody's needs, yet was very sensitive to both
12 the environment and the historical issues.

13 It took a long time, we spent a lot of
14 money, but, in the long-term, I think we've shown
15 that by pulling everybody together, and working in
16 conjunction with the historic preservation offices
17 at the state, at the federal level, in working
18 with the Park Service and its historic architects,
19 we were able to do something, I think, that solves
20 some immediate problems, was helpful to the
21 environment and the economics of the State of New
22 Jersey, without doing anything that made the
23 environmental situation or the operations here at
24 the Hook, placing them in any kind of jeopardy.

25 When I say that, I will say a couple of

1 caveats.

2 First of all, it is probably easier to
3 do that working with state, federal governments,
4 nonprofit organizations --

5 GREG: Excuse me, Mr. Grant. You have
6 to wrap up.

7 MR. GRANT: -- than it is with
8 commercial operators, but I have had nothing but
9 good luck with the Park Service in making sure
10 that whatever we do does not impinge on the
11 environment or the historical value.

12 I am just a little confused, and, you
13 know, one of the original people we worked with
14 was Mike Edelstein, and I am glad to see him back
15 here, and maybe he can answer the question after
16 this. I was just concerned, we had tons of
17 documents issued that we had to respond to. I
18 mean, our contract for leasing the property --

19 GREG: Mr. Grant, you have to wrap up
20 your question.

21 MR. GRANT: I am just wondering why some
22 of these kinds of things were not made available
23 to assure the people that were concerned about
24 environmental issues and economic growth issues to
25 show the level of respect and concern that the

1 Park Service had, and keeping control of
2 development so that it would not run rampant.

3 GREG: Thank you, Mr. Grant. We will
4 try to pick up that question after the rest of the
5 comments.

6 MR. GRANT: Maybe you can respond to
7 that.

8 GREG: We are going to respond to the
9 questions after everybody gets their three minutes
10 of fame.

11 (End of tape two.)

12 GREG: 2 minutes and 59 seconds. You
13 better hurry up.

14 MR. RIKER: Okay. Thank you. My name
15 is Robert J. Riker, a local resident for 37 years.

16 My interest is in transportation
17 issues.

18 I share the previous speaker's concern
19 for the many wonderful historical treasures that
20 must be maintained out here at Fort Hancock;
21 however, I do question whether this proposal for
22 commercial development at Fort Hancock has a
23 realistic chance of success due to a lack of
24 adequate public access.

25 It is, after all is said and done, the

1 commercial operations that must support the many
2 very worthy nonprofit operations and activities
3 that take place here on the Hook.

4 The restoration costs of this historic
5 area would seem to require a very large quantity
6 of commercial, and, thus, of vehicular traffic to
7 generate the funds needed.

8 Resort and conference centers typically
9 have a captive market of hundreds of people who
10 are spending three or more days at what can be an
11 isolated site. With only a few bed and breakfasts
12 for overnight stays, I must presume that the
13 developer does not expect Fort Hancock's
14 commercial operators to be dependent on the
15 temporary residence for any substantial part of
16 their business.

17 I, therefore, suggest the public should
18 have two questions in mind. Most businesses
19 relying on area natives for customers rate their
20 locations by how many people live or work within
21 10-minute and 20-minute travel times. Can you
22 really believe and think of half a dozen types of
23 commercial operations which would locate at the
24 Fort?

25 The second thought I offer you, most

1 businesses are now active six or seven days a
2 week, 52 weeks a year. Do you believe these
3 commercial operations will be accessible in July
4 and all weekends? And that sufficient numbers
5 would want to make the trip in January and
6 February weekdays?

7 If this project is relying on
8 commercial activity, how are they going to get to
9 and from those businesses?

10 I have accused other governmental
11 operations of going forward with little more than
12 a build-it-and-they-will-come philosophy. In this
13 case, I fear it is rebuild it and they will come.
14 And maybe, in 10 years, there will be sufficient
15 money to restore the buildings that need
16 restoration now.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 GREG: While Edith VanWinkle is making
20 her way up to the front, just for the good of the
21 order, so to speak, it is 5 o'clock, which I think
22 everybody knows was the allotted time I think we
23 anticipated ending by.

24 I did want to let everybody know,
25 according to my list, we are halfway through the

1 number of people that wanted to speak, so I would,
2 and the suggestion has been made by my fine fellow
3 colleagues, that three minutes sounds like a short
4 time, and if you are up there it probably seems
5 like either a short time or a long time, but, I
6 mean, one of the things I think would be helpful,
7 since we are only halfway through the number of
8 people that signed up, while we certainly want to
9 hear from everybody, I would respectfully suggest
10 that if you are making the same comment that
11 somebody else made, maybe you can make that as
12 quickly and as succinctly as possible.

13 I am not accusing you of anything,
14 Edith. I am sure you have a wonderful thing to
15 say, but just for the sake of efficiency, again to
16 try to move things along, we are only halfway
17 through the list, so I would respectfully suggest
18 that, in order to keep things moving along, we are
19 only halfway there, if you could make sure if you
20 are going to say the same thing that somebody else
21 said, you can say that very quickly, and with that
22 fine introduction, it is our pleasure to welcome
23 Edith here tonight.

24 MS. VAN WINKLE: My name is Edith
25 VanWinkle. I am a resident of New Jersey. My

1 association with this place goes back to 1950. My
2 association as a family member goes back to 1624.

3 I am a member of the Historical
4 Association of Monmouth County.

5 I love Sandy Hook. I am out here
6 winter and summer. I come out here just to be
7 calm. It is quiet, it is lovely, and it is
8 pitiful to see these buildings going to pieces.

9 I served as a military wife of an Army
10 officer for 17 years, and I visited and lived on a
11 lot of Army posts. This place has a special place
12 in my heart, and I am all for seeing it come back
13 to life, but I do think we have to be careful.

14 I think that the assessment that I read
15 provides a wonderful overview of a new town, but I
16 don't think that's what we really need here is a
17 new town. What we need is restoration, and I
18 think that people should keep it in mind that
19 restoration is of historical value. We can make
20 something out of it.

21 I don't know about the commercial
22 aspect, I have no association or relationship to
23 it at all; and, in keeping with your request, I am
24 going to make it short.

25 But I am concerned about some things

1 that I read in the assessment, and one of the
2 things was the need for a pub. Frankly, I don't
3 see how it could possibly survive the winter.

4 Wintertime is very different from
5 summertime here. Summertime we are loaded with
6 people from New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and
7 from south and north Jersey, but the wintertime it
8 is a different story. And, of course, a lot of
9 towns depend upon summer trade. Highlands depends
10 upon it. Sea Bright depends upon it. And so I
11 think that we need to give it a little more time,
12 a little more consideration, and I do want to see
13 it happen, I have no regrets about who is doing
14 what. I just want to see -- to see it survive.

15 GREG: Thank you very much, Edith.

16 (Applause.)

17 GREG: The next person on the list, I
18 am having a little trouble with the handwriting,
19 so it is Peter P, then I won't try to do the
20 middle part, but it is Junior.

21 O'Szuch. Oh such a guy.

22 I will behave myself, Peter, but you're
23 next.

24 And after Peter is Tara Ryan.

25 Peter.

1 MR. O'SZUCH: Good afternoon. My wife
2 and I recently moved back to this area. We had
3 been in Washington where I finished up a federal
4 career of approximately 30 years with GSA, where
5 the leasing authority originally comes from and
6 has been delegated to the Park Service, so I am
7 somewhat familiar with the leasing -- the
8 contractual aspects of leasing. And when we heard
9 of the public meeting that was going to be held, I
10 thought, gee, this might be something that I
11 could, you know, add something to, or at least be
12 of interest to, particularly since I, too, as
13 everyone here, loves Sandy Hook.

14 And when we came to the March meeting,
15 I was prepared for a presentation, and no
16 presentation was forthcoming. Mr. Wassel was on

17 one side of the room, the Park Service was on the
18 other side, each had their chalkboards, and if you
19 wanted any information, you had to proffer a
20 question, and get an answer. When I proffered my
21 questions, I didn't get suitable answers.

22 I did pay my \$5, which I thought would
23 get me a copy of the RFP, and -- or whatever
24 documentation was available, and we didn't get
25 that. We got an environmental assessment, and not

1 much more than that.

2 And one of the big questions that I
3 have, and I have put before the parties, why a
4 60-year lease initially? Why not a lesser period
5 with extensions up to 60; or, you know, why is 60
6 a magic number?

7 I don't know if everyone was asked to
8 propose on a 60-year lease.

9 And this would permit, if you are
10 unhappy, to make periodic reviews, and, also, was
11 there termination for default, termination for
12 convenience in the lease.

13 Didn't know, because I wasn't able to
14 get a copy of the document.

15 So these were concerns from a
16 contractual point of view, which is where my field
17 of expertise was for 30 years with the federal
18 government.

19 Also, I asked Mr. Wassel, you know,
20 financial consideration, return on investment,
21 that's really what people are interested in. What
22 happens if you don't generate the projections that
23 is the basis of your proposal, or are the basis of
24 your proposal?

25 Well, I was kind of dismissed, and, you

1 know, in the beginning everybody feels everything
2 is going to be rosy. It is only when you get into
3 the contract that it gets sticky, and you need the
4 contractual documentation or remedies, and not
5 have to go -- I was told if it doesn't work out
6 well, we can always take them to court.

7 It's much easier to get rid of them, if
8 you are unhappy with somebody's performance, with
9 the termination provision.

10 And that may or may not be in there.

11 Also, I asked, you know, were there
12 periodic reviews? You know, once the ink is dry,
13 are we stuck with the contractor for 60 years?
14 And, apparently, it is a 60-year initial term
15 lease. And short of taking someone to court, that
16 was the only way that, you know, we could change
17 contractors.

18 So I do applaud the fact that you are
19 going to release the documents. I will be looking
20 at some of those, and specifically the basis for
21 the selection criteria. Was it kind of warm and
22 fuzzy or was it very specific? Was it, you know,
23 a point system or was it cost and other factors?

24 You know, how did we arrive at Sandy
25 Hook Partners --

1 GREG: Peter, you need to wrap up.

2 MR. O'SZUCH: -- that Sandy Hook
3 Partners was the person -- was the entity that we
4 should contract with?

5 And, again, due to the impartiality of
6 the federal contracting process, I got a kind of a
7 lump in my throat when I heard Mr. Wassel state
8 that four years prior to the receipt of proposals
9 he was invited in by the Park Service to chat
10 about the perspective project. So, hopefully,
11 everything has been done correctly, and I look
12 forward to the next meeting, and thank you very
13 much, ladies and gentlemen.

14 GREG: Thank you, sir.

15 (Applause.)

16 GREG: After Tara, we have Louisa
17 McMillan, I believe.

18 MR. RYAN: Thank you.

19 My name is Tara Ryan, and I am a
20 resident of the Highlands, and I have been coming
21 to Sandy Hook very frequently since I was a little
22 child.

23 In 1978, I worked as a project manager
24 for an adaptive reuse program partnering with the
25 National Trust for the Historic Preservation and

1 (inaudible) Cultural Center. We were responsible
2 for transforming 28 buildings on 80 acres into a
3 cultural center comprised of meeting rooms, art
4 galleries, museums, classrooms, restaurants,
5 catering halls, etcetera, etcetera.

6 We did it. It worked.

7 But it took a good long time, and we
8 could not just go in and make a presentation that
9 we were going to do 17 different projects, and
10 renovations, and it was accepted all at once. I
11 was constantly revised.

12 I know that the building is here at
13 Fort Hancock must be preserved. They are
14 wonderful, and I know, again, that the historic
15 reuse can work, but I don't know if this is a
16 specific plan, if this plan is going to work.

17 I have a lot of concerns.

18 One, why so fast? Why did this happen
19 so fast? How come we didn't know about it?

20 I read all of the newspapers locally, I
21 am down here, I read all the notices, and I feel
22 that not enough information was given out.

23 Now, perhaps this is changing now. I
24 hope it is. But as we go on, whatever plan is
25 selected, because I don't believe that we have

1 selected this one plan yet, and I do have
2 questions about the selective process, whatever
3 plan is selected, we must be carefully monitored
4 and detailed. There must be a full disclosure to
5 the public, and we have to let the public know,
6 you have to let the public know what is happening
7 every step of the way.

8 There shouldn't be this suspicion and
9 there shouldn't be what we consider surprises.

10 As a resident of the Highlands, I am
11 quite concerned about the impact of the project on
12 the surrounding communities. Specifically, I am
13 concerned about the traffic on Route 36 to the
14 Highlands Bridge onto Sandy Hook.

15 Every summer weekend the southbound
16 traffic on Route 36 is backed up miles and miles.
17 This is often not because the bridge is open, it
18 is because Sandy Hook parking lots are full and
19 there is nowhere for these cars to go, and there
20 is nowhere, no way for these people to be aware of
21 what is going on. Many of the people have never
22 been here before, they don't know where else they
23 could go, and it is a mess.

24 Granted it is only for a couple of
25 months during the summer, but if your plan is to

1 be financially successful, you want thousands of
2 more vehicles to come everyday.

3 What will this do to the already
4 congested traffic?

5 The noise and air pollution from the
6 gas fumes, it is already a mess. All this needs
7 to be addressed.

8 The Highlands Bridge project at least
9 several years down the road could only add to the
10 congestion and confusion.

11 Signage along Route 36 alerting the
12 public to the parking situation is not an adequate
13 solution. Further study is needed before the
14 project goes forward to insure that the residents
15 of the surrounding communities do not end up in a
16 nightmare of year-round unmanageable traffic.

17 GREG: Excuse me, Tara. You need to
18 wrap up.

19 MS. RYAN: I'm done. Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 GREG: I believe Louisa McMillan is up,
22 and I think it is Walter Kimma, K-I-M-M-A, I
23 believe, after Louisa.

24 MS. MC MILLAN: Hi. I am not going to
25 repeat. I had a lot of comments that have already

1 been presented, so in the sense of time, I am not
2 going to repeat them.

3 I just wanted to say for the record
4 that I have no political or financial interest in
5 this project, and I am not sure that -- you know,
6 I am not sure that this is a good marriage. I
7 think that they are probably very good at what
8 they do, and I am sure they will be very careful
9 with preserving historic property. The buildings
10 definitely need to be renovated and restored, but,
11 I mean, according to a structural engineer who is
12 here today, they are structurally stable. So we
13 don't need, you know -- how much do we have to
14 give up in order to get something -- in order to
15 get something fixed?

16 Habitat for Humanity, I think
17 everybody's heard of that, is a nonprofit
18 organization that builds homes. I am sure,
19 because these are structurally sound, according to
20 this one person, and I am not sure that that's a
21 totally scientific presentation today, but that's
22 the problem. Where are the scientific
23 presentations? Where are the representatives for
24 the communities? Where are the environmental
25 scientists?

1 And I have a concern that they are not
2 here, our interests are not being represented.

3 I live here, I live right across the
4 river, and I sit there on my deck and the traffic
5 is horrendous, as Tara Ryan said. And, even this
6 bridge plan that I discussed with my town isn't
7 going to solve the problem. The problem is the
8 tolls going into Sandy Hook. That's where the
9 traffic backs up.

10 And the fact that the draw bridge is
11 there actually helps to control the flow of
12 traffic going into Sandy Hook. So the draw bridge
13 is actually good that it's there because it helps
14 prevent that traffic from backing up even further
15 from the toll booth.

16 I have -- you know, my other concern is
17 that, as a federal property, we own this really,
18 and we really should have access to all the
19 buildings on the ground, and as I was sitting here
20 listening to all the presentations, I was
21 imagining what it was going to be like, and
22 walking around the grounds and seeing signs that
23 say private use only, and knowing I wasn't allowed
24 into 37 buildings, or however many are going to be
25 reserved for corporations.

1 GREG: Excuse me. You need to wrap up.

2 MS. MC MILLAN: So there's going to be
3 corporate people who are going to obviously
4 benefit from the hospitality suites who are going
5 to be here, who are travelling on business, and
6 local residents really aren't going to benefit,
7 and my taxes are going to have to pay for the
8 repairs on the roads from all the additional
9 traffic, and I don't see anyone -- I'm
10 disappointed in the town of Highlands, the fact
11 that we have not been represented properly, we
12 have not been informed properly by the town, and I
13 am very disappointed in, also, the duration of the
14 time that we have had to present our issues, and I
15 don't -- I am very confused and very disappointed
16 in the whole process, quite frankly, and I think
17 it should be better.

18 GREG: Thank you. You need to wrap up.

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 GREG: After Walter, I believe Bob
22 Jobson would be up after Walter.

23 MR. KIMMA: I'm Walter Kimma. I am a
24 councilman in Spring Lake.

25 I will be real quick.

1 I just want to make sure, this plan, my
2 concern is that beach-goers and fisherman don't
3 have their access denied because of other
4 developmental uses, so I do hope that the plan and
5 the park do continue to monitor that, because it
6 is really the beach use and the fisherman.

7 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

8 GREG: Thank you, Councilman.

9 (Applause.)

10 GREG: After Bob, I believe we have Jim
11 Blaney, B-L-A-N-E-Y, something. We know this is
12 Bob. Go ahead Bob.

13 MR. JOBSON: My name is Bob Jobson, and
14 I live in Rumson.

15 I am not unmindful of the historical
16 significance of the Fort, and the need to preserve
17 it; however, I think that in focusing in on that,
18 we are overlooking the primary value of Sandy
19 Hook.

20 There's -- New Jersey has no shortage
21 of buildings built between the years of 1850 and
22 1950, and it has no shortage of office space. It
23 has no shortage of nightclubs and hotels which are
24 in this plan.

25 What it does has a shortage of is open

1 space, and it particularly has a shortage of
2 coastal open space.

3 After 2 or 300 years of development, we
4 are left with two stretches of accessible
5 coastline that is undeveloped. One is here.

6 And make no mistake about it, if this
7 plan goes forward, our grandchildren will only
8 have one place of accessible undeveloped
9 coastline, and it's not going to be here, it is
10 going to be down at Island Beach State Park.

11 I don't mean to imply that the
12 gentlemen here are unprincipled or that they don't
13 have the best intentions at heart, but people come
14 and go, and particularly in the Park Service.
15 There is a rotation schedule in five years. All
16 these well-intentioned people will be doing
17 different jobs, and in 15 years they will have
18 been retired for the most part, I hope I am not
19 offending anybody here, and, in fact, long before
20 this proposed lease ends all of us in this room
21 are going to be dead and buried and that lease
22 will go on.

23 So the way the development works is
24 that in five years a new crop of well-intentioned
25 individuals will come, but when they come, there

1 will already been a nightclub in place, and there
2 will be a hotel in place. And so the developer
3 will come to them crying the blues saying, we
4 can't make any money, projects, blah, blah, blah.
5 And so they will say, okay, maybe we can add a
6 couple more rooms, because they already have the
7 fact, they have a hotel there already, they
8 already have a nightclub. Okay, let's add a
9 little country blues place. And it will slowly go
10 on.

11 Development is relentless.

12 Another thing to keep in mind is that
13 this is an absolutely huge proposal. It is 65 to
14 \$90 million. That's two to three times the annual
15 budget of Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon, which
16 are the jewels of the National Park Service.

17 When the -- and a 65 to \$90 million
18 project is not supported by a few little B and B
19 rooms and a small nightclub. It takes a lot more
20 than that.

21 So what does it take? You look through
22 here and what do you see? I don't know. You see
23 four pages devoted to what sort of street lights
24 are going to go in place and where they are going
25 to go, but you don't see -- you don't see much in

1 the way of what's going on. When you listen to
2 the public statements of the developer, you hear,
3 well, words like I envision, or I would like to
4 see. I think we need a lot more than that before
5 we sign over the jewel of the New Jersey coast to
6 a developer.

7 The recent events in New Jersey, and
8 other parts of the country, have shown the dangers
9 of huge privatization projects, and the difficulty
10 in controlling them after the fact. So I would
11 suggest that the National Parks Service look
12 towards, I am sure you looked at many projects,
13 but if you have to privatize to try to save these
14 buildings, look to the much smaller projects and a
15 much shorter term.

16 Thank you.

17 GREG: Thank you, Bob.

18 After Jim, we have Sharon Burnam.

19 It's your three minutes, just don't
20 dance, whatever you do.

21 MR. BLANEY: My background is in
22 boating and sailing, and I am in the marine
23 industry and have been for about 25 years.

24 I think that the best improvement, or
25 one of the best improvements to be made here at

1 Sandy Hook would be the addition of a passenger
2 carrying schooner.

3 The boat that I propose is a two-masted
4 schooner. I am partners in this particular boat,
5 and we have two of these boats, one in Newport,
6 Rhode Island, and one is at the Chelsea Pier at
7 New York City.

8 What we do, the reason why I think this
9 is a good idea is because I don't think enough
10 people have access to the water. I think too many
11 people, too many times the availability to the
12 water and to boating is just for the very wealthy
13 people.

14 We now take people out sailing and we
15 make money doing it.

16 I would rather take people out sailing
17 who have never had the opportunity to go out on a
18 boat. We take people who have money out for rides
19 so that we can pay the cost and expenses, but for
20 myself, I think the most satisfying thing that I
21 could think of doing is showing people how much
22 fun it is to go out on the water. Giving more
23 people access to the water here at Sandy Hook I
24 think would be a really good addition to the park.

25 Our schooner can show the history of

1 Sandy Hook, because the history of Sandy Hook was
2 almost entirely determined by sailing ships. It
3 was sailing ships that led to the development of
4 this country. It was sailing ships that helped
5 our Navy protect the waters of New York Harbor,
6 and it was the whole reason why Fort Hancock was
7 established, was for sailing ships.

8 Another benefit of this project would
9 be as an educational tool.

10 I am a former high school English
11 teacher, and I think ideally the history of
12 sailing ships dovetails perfectly with the history
13 of Sandy Hook, and I think it is a great tool to
14 show people about the history of Sandy Hook and
15 why it was developed the way it was, and all the
16 important nautical and maritime expenses that have
17 happened here.

18 We can also be used for marine science
19 education. A boat like this, we operate seven
20 days a week. We operate three or four times a
21 day. We can take water samples, we can be
22 available to all the educational institutions here
23 to allow them to be able to utilize the boat to
24 collect samples, to do water samples, and
25 specimens, and things like that.

1 Principals of mathematics and
2 engineering can also be taught through the use of
3 a vessel like this.

4 It was really engineering was totally
5 developed, totally designed to develop better
6 sailing ships.

7 Finally, this is what I do. This is
8 one of the things that we do.

9 We are experienced. We design the
10 boats, we build the boats, we operate the boats.
11 We have been successful in making money at them,
12 and if I wanted to make more money, I would go to
13 Philadelphia, or I would go somewhere else to do
14 this. I live in the Highlands, and I want to take
15 people out sailing, show them a good time, show
16 them the mystery of the area, and how sailing
17 ships and the history of Sandy Hook are tied
18 together very closely.

19 GREG: Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 GREG: After Sharon Burnam, we have
22 Dr. Judy Kramer will be up next.

23 MS. BURNAM: Hi. My name is Sharon
24 Burnam, and I am Executive Director of the
25 Monmouth Conservation Foundation, and I actually

1 just am going to make a couple of points because
2 everybody's really made most of the points that I
3 would have talked about.

4 There are concerns about the
5 partnership as far as the development, the
6 commercialization of Sandy Hook. We are very
7 concerned about the fact that the papers haven't
8 been released, and we are hoping that now they are
9 going to be and there will be time for the public
10 to look at them and comment on them.

11 But one of the things that we also
12 would like to put on the table, and I mentioned
13 this when I talked to Richard Wells at the open
14 house, and also to Jim Wassel, that the park
15 system and the redeveloper have both stated that
16 in the plan it is going to be limited to exactly
17 what the plan states and no more development can
18 go on no matter what happens, if the money isn't
19 made, if the project isn't successful, they are
20 still not going to be allowed to change that and
21 build a 30-story condominium.

22 It may say that, we haven't seen those
23 papers yet, but to assure that no other
24 development would happen, to really assure that,
25 what we would like to see happen is have an

1 easement placed on the property that makes those
2 statements, and that easement, that conservation
3 easement should ride with the deed, so it is in
4 perpetuity, and it should be in the hands of an
5 organization, not necessarily ours, we are a small
6 organization, a county one, but make a state wide
7 like the New Jersey conservation foundation that
8 would monitor it, to make sure that if the
9 development is put in place that it can never,
10 ever be different, it can't be changed to somebody
11 else, and the uses of the buildings can't be
12 changed.

13 (Applause).

14 MS. BURNAM: That's -- we figure that if
15 they are saying that's already in the lease, then
16 there should be no problem with this, and they
17 should be with us, and we should just have it
18 done.

19 That's it. Thank you.

20 GREG: Thank you, Sharon.

21 After Dr. Kramer, Gloria Filipone, I
22 believe.

23 DR. KRAMER: Hi, there. I'm Dr. Judy
24 Kramer, and I have been a resident of Monmouth
25 County for 28 years. As a child, adolescent and

1 family psychologist, and I am the president of the
2 Monmouth Council of Girl Scouts, I represent
3 11,700 girls and 4200 adult volunteers.

4 Part of our Girl Scout law is to
5 preserve and protect our natural environment, and
6 to use resources wisely.

7 While I understand that we have a great
8 opportunity here to preserve and rehabilitate the
9 historical and cultural treasures here at Fort
10 Hancock, I feel I must speak on behalf of the
11 residents with whom we share this beautiful piece
12 of real estate, those being the shore birds, the
13 wide variety of marine life, and the migratory
14 bird populations that all use Sandy Hook as
15 temporary and permanent homes.

16 I have not heard a lot here today about
17 the fragile and complex ecosystems here at Sandy
18 Hook that need our protection and must have
19 support.

20 This redevelopment cannot just be about
21 buildings, and about history. We and our children
22 will suffer if we do not also make it about trees
23 and shrubs and the shore line, the fish, the
24 mollusks, the piping plovers, the song birds and
25 all those tiny creatures that our children love to

1 watch while they are on the beaches and in nature
2 trails here on the peninsula.

3 I have, and many of you have, watched
4 Monmouth County change in the past decades, and it
5 no longer has the beautiful green open areas that
6 many of us fell in love with when we came and
7 settled here.

8 I live in Shrewsbury, and when I moved
9 there, I naively thought there was no more room
10 for development. At the end of my street, the
11 wetlands have been developed and now there are 26
12 homes, among the historical stands of trees, very
13 few of which remain.

14 There is no redevelopment and certainly
15 not development without great cost to wildlife.
16 We know this when it comes to birds, when it comes
17 to mammals, and to the wildlife habitat, and if we
18 do not protect the special interrelationships of
19 flora and fauna in any of the natural areas left
20 in New Jersey, which are dwindling, we all will
21 suffer.

22 We will lose ecological complexity, we
23 will suffer decreased quality of air and water,
24 and we will damage the beauty of this particular
25 area for our children and for our children's

1 children.

2 So I don't know how to simultaneously
3 support this big rehabilitation project, and it is
4 very big, and, also, to protect and preserve the
5 flora and fauna that are important to all of us.
6 And I have not heard enough about the
7 environmental impact, and I wish I was an
8 environmental specialist or ecological biologist
9 so that I could really look at what kind of
10 species impact we are going to have here.

11 I urge the Park Service professionals,
12 thank you for having this meeting, and I urge
13 Sandy Hook Partners to really solicit advice and
14 guidance from environmental professionals. Don't
15 wait until it is too late, don't wait until there
16 is a problem.

17 We need to preventively look at the
18 environmental impact on all the fragile species
19 that live here, and there are many people who know
20 this shore area really well and can make
21 suggestions about how to protect the birds, the
22 fish, the insects and the mammals, and we need
23 them.

24 GREG: Excuse me, Doctor. You need to
25 wrap up.

1 DR. KRAMER: Those animals and birds
2 were here before Fort Hancock was built, and we
3 need them for the health of our county, our state,
4 and really of our planet. Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 GREG: Thank you.

7 Is Gloria here?

8 Anything close to Gloria Filipone?

9 Are there any Gloria's left?

10 How about Derry Bennett?

11 After Mr. Bennett is Robert Cosgrove.

12 MR. BENNETT: Sorry. I didn't
13 (inaudible).

14 GREG: Completely my responsibility,
15 Derry. Thank you.

16 MR. BENNETT: My name is Derry Bennett.
17 I am Executive Director of the American Littoral
18 Society, which has its offices out here at Sandy
19 Hook. Littoral means coastal, and it is
20 interesting the person who came before me said
21 some of what I was going to touch on today.

22 The Society was founded at Sandy Hook
23 and has been located here since 1961. And our
24 original office was in the hospital that burned
25 down. We then moved over to building 22, which is

1 the building the consortium is in, and in 1984 we
2 moved to building 18, at the very other end of
3 officers row here.

4 We are one of the two successful
5 proposals for adaptive reuse of the building, and
6 we are negotiating a lease with the Park Service
7 for that one building. And I sent a letter last
8 night to Russ Wilson making it very clear that our
9 proposal was open to the public, and I don't know
10 if you want to distribute it today, but it is out
11 for you to look at. We are a nonprofit
12 organization. We have been very successful at
13 being a nonprofit since then.

14 So maybe what we -- what's in our
15 proposal is not similar to what Jim Wassel is
16 proposing, but it is out there for you to look at.

17 I am in kind of a peculiar position in
18 the sense that the Littoral Society has been here
19 and intends to stay here, and it is not for us to
20 say we are here, we don't want anybody else.

21 We are interested in the study and
22 conservation of marine life, its habitat in the
23 coastal zone, and what we do is consistent with
24 what the Park Service is doing. So we are quite
25 comfortable being here, we love it here, and as

1 all of you know, it is a very special place.

2 I think the society would support the
3 concept of this reusing plan. We have questions
4 about some of the details, and we plan to spell
5 those out in our written comments due in the early
6 part of May.

7 Some of it has to do with habitat
8 protection. Although it is important to note that
9 what the partners are proposing is on this 144
10 acres right here.

11 But there is spillover. The more
12 people you have, the more likely they are to be
13 out looking around.

14 My impression, from the Park Service,
15 since we have been here, is that we are in pretty
16 good hands.

17 In addition to the species that were
18 mentioned before, the Park Service has
19 reintroduced several species. You will all be
20 pleased to know that we have hognose snakes and
21 Fallards (phonetic) toads out here. They were
22 reintroduced. It is exciting to see the hognose
23 snakes because they imitate cobras. They are only
24 about a foot and a half long, and if you disturb
25 them after they failed to frighten you away as a

1 cobra, they turn over and play dead. You can pick
2 them up and they will turn over again and play
3 dead.

4 So the Park Service I think is doing a
5 good job, not a perfect job, and I would suggest
6 that some of the income that comes from this
7 partnership, if it works, go to reemphasize the
8 natural parts of Sandy Hook.

9 That's it.

10 GREG: Thank you very much, Mr.
11 Bennett.

12 (Applause.)

13 GREG: As Mr. Cosgrove comes forward,
14 we should have Paul Belasaro on deck.

15 MR. COSGROVE: My name is Robert
16 Cosgrove. I will be brief. A lot of what I was
17 going to say has already been said.

18 I grew up in Monmouth County and
19 previously served as A councilman in Highlands,
20 and my thoughts simply, without commenting on the
21 specification, which I think we have a lot of pros
22 and cons, is that I would just like to applaud the
23 Park Service and a lot of the individuals who have
24 donated their time from various backgrounds of
25 public service, and professional backgrounds, to

1 make something happen.

2 As Congressman Palone said, there's no
3 money forthcoming from the federal government to
4 preserve these buildings, so people have gotten
5 together to take some action to make it happen,
6 and there's been some projects already done, and a
7 lot of people have commented as far as the school
8 and the lighthouse and this theater, and I just
9 think it is a great thing that so many people are
10 involved in trying to make it happen in a way that
11 will preserve the buildings and the park for
12 future generations.

13 Thank you.

14 GREG: Thank you, sir.

15 Is Paul Belasaro here?

16 If not, I believe we have Bonnie
17 Gibble. No?

18 Steven D. Calhoun?

19 Either the handwriting is getting worse
20 or my pronunciation is getting worse.

21 Michael Uber?

22 I can't tell if people are coming up to
23 speak or leave.

24 Dr. Terry Sealand? Oh.

25 I'm sorry, Steven. You're too late.

1 No. Let's go.

2 MR. CALHOUN: My name is Steven Calhoun.
3 I am a historian, and I absolutely and
4 unequivocally oppose the commercialization of
5 Sandy Hook.

6 The Bush administration uses the words
7 local influence as a guideline for our national
8 parks.

9 The current administration is
10 intoxicated with the simple-minded notion that
11 covers over a secret agenda to commercialize and
12 sell our national and historic treasures.

13 Their method is to invite business to
14 use Sandy Hook as a source of lucrative income.

15 Their policy ignores the fact that our
16 national parks are not the exclusive domain of the
17 wealthy but a reserve for all the citizens of the
18 United States of America.

19 Here at Sandy Hook, any building
20 occupied by a commercial business enterprise will
21 not be available to the citizens of the United
22 States. Any parking space taken by a commercial
23 business enterprise is a parking space stolen from
24 American citizens who have the birthright to enjoy
25 the historic and nature experience of our park.

1 Any creation of new parking lots will
2 exacerbate the delicate balance of the ecological
3 system, pave over many historic and two foreknown
4 Indian American prehistoric archeological sites.

5 Specifically, if the War of 1812
6 archeological sites are lots and paved over, we
7 lose the opportunity to teach our children about
8 the effective defense system which protected New
9 Jersey and New York City during the War of 1812.

10 As for the two endangered prehistoric
11 archeological Indian sites, the National Park
12 Service should cooperate with bona fide historians
13 in our effort to determine if the artifact
14 findings at Sandy Hook can be connected to an
15 American Indian tribe town called, it is very
16 difficult, it is Indian, Sepac Dante (phonetic) of
17 the Brancing (phonetic) tribe that once existed in
18 Monmouth County in the year 1676.

19 It should be noted that the three
20 chiefs of the Indian tribe had personal symbols
21 thereby indicating that they were in a formative
22 stage of the development of written language.

23 It may be that artifacts found here at
24 Sandy Hook will show that their symbols can
25 increase our understanding of their harmonious

1 coexistence with nature.

2 The government should respect the
3 history of our American Indians, the former
4 original owners of this land at Sandy Hook.

5 GREG: Excuse me, sir. You need to
6 wrap up.

7 MR. CALHOUN: Okay. I am the one who
8 found the deed, and in that deed it prohibits a
9 tavern or ordinary, which is also defined as a
10 place of lodging, and in a section of land north
11 of the lighthouse, on a line going from east to
12 west, right through the lighthouse. You can't do
13 it. The answer is no.

14 Thank you for listening.

15 (Applause.)

16 GREG: I think we tried Michael Uber.
17 Michael Uber not here?

18 He's gone?

19 Dr. Terry Sealand? Gone.

20 Mary Lou Strong.

21 MS. STRONG: My name is Mary Lou Strong,
22 as he said. I am chairman of the Middletown
23 Landmark Commission, and before I read our letter,
24 I would just like to say that I think that Judith
25 Stanley Coleman and her husband, Judge Coleman,

1 deserve a lot of credit for opening up this
2 process and giving us all a chance to speak, and I
3 just wanted to say that.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. STRONG: I see he's left so I now
6 dare read my letter.

7 It is addressed to Russell Wilson,
8 Superintendent.

9 "I am writing to you on behalf of the
10 Middletown Landmarks Commission to provide our
11 comments on the environmental assessment.

12 "Not many people are aware of the fact
13 that Sandy Hook and Fort Hancock are part of the
14 Township of Middletown, which is one of the three
15 original townships of Monmouth County.

16 "Middletown values its heritage and,
17 accordingly, the commission has a deep interest in
18 the preservation of the historic buildings of Fort
19 Hancock.

20 "We also care about the concerns of
21 environmentalists. Much of the Hook has been left
22 in a natural state. It is critical to maintain
23 this environment with a minimum of new intrusion.

24 "We have come to the situation where we
25 are today because the federal government

1 consistently under funds the National Parks
2 Service. This has led to demolition by neglect of
3 the National Park Service's historic buildings on
4 Sandy Hook and all across the country.

5 "This is a disgrace. We must urge New
6 Jersey's members of Congress to push for
7 additional appropriations for Fort Hancock. Also,
8 voters should stress the need for a dedicated fund
9 for maintenance for the Park Service's historic
10 buildings nationwide.

11 "The Landmarks Commission supports the
12 National Park Service's proposal for the adaptive
13 use of the Fort Hancock and Sandy Hook proving
14 national historic landmark. 30 years of research
15 and work have gone into this plan.

16 "The Commission recognizes the urgent
17 need to act now as we are witnessing the
18 disintegration of a national treasure.

19 "It will take the culmination of every
20 tool which the Park Service has, such as the
21 historic leasing agreement with Sandy Hook
22 Partners LLC, to preserve the historic core of
23 Fort Hancock.

24 "The Commission is aware of some of the
25 concerns which have been expressed in the

1 newspapers about Sandy Hook Partners's proposal to
2 restore and rehabilitate 37 of Fort Hancock's
3 buildings, including the magnificent 18 officers'
4 row buildings.

5 "Due to the enormity and complexity of
6 this project, it requires a developer with
7 extensive resources and experience, who is
8 familiar with working with the Secretary of the
9 Interior's standards for rehabilitation.

10 "Fort Hancock has been designated a
11 national historic landmark, which means it
12 possesses exceptional significance in our nation's
13 history.

14 "There are only eight national historic
15 landmarks in Monmouth County. Sandy Hook Partners
16 will have to meet a higher, stricter standard,
17 which will be much more exacting and respectful of
18 both the historic buildings and the landscape.

19 "The public should understand that the
20 1986 Tax Reform Act provides a 20 percent tax
21 credit, which lowers the amount of tax owed. This
22 tax incentive program is one of the federal
23 government's most successful and cost effective
24 means of encouraging the preservation of our
25 historic sites. It rewards private investment in

1 rehabilitating historic properties and, thus,
2 accomplishes the established social policy goals
3 of preserving the national patrimony.

4 "We cannot allow Fort Hancock to
5 smolder into oblivion."

6 (End of tape three.)

7 Thank you very much.

8 GREG: Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 GREG: Okay. As we talked a couple
11 hours ago, the process now will swing to the
12 assimilation (sic) of the questions that were
13 written down, so what we are going to do now is go
14 through the questions provided, and then we will
15 have the panel provide the answers to the
16 questions that were put together by the staff.

17 So the first question is: "What
18 percentage of the space in the 36 building is
19 being leased by commercial and what percentage
20 educational?" I think the question is what
21 percentage will be commercial and what percentage
22 of it educational.

23 MR. VOICE: The draft lease provides
24 for three uses, which are education, environmental
25 signs, hospitality and office space. The -- whose

1 pit -- I'm sorry. The educational component will
2 be the largest of the three components, although
3 it can be up to 50 percent.

4 Then one of the other two uses can be
5 as much as 40 percent with a total of 100 percent
6 for the three uses. So it -- we understand it to
7 be roughly a third and a third and a third, but
8 most heavily weighted towards education.

9 GREG: The next one is: "Is the
10 project subject to state laws for protection of
11 the environment, example, KAFRA?"

12 Is the person who submitted the
13 question here?

14 Could you fill me in on what KAFRA is,
15 sir?

16 MR. VOICE: A New Jersey law that
17 requires developments of a certain size to go
18 before the New Jersey Department of Environmental
19 Protection (inaudible) impact (inaudible).

20 MR. VOICE: Let me take a shot at
21 this.

22 The starting point is the federal
23 government has sovereign immunity, and we are not
24 subject to state laws, but Congress has
25 surrendered that immunity in many areas, and one

1 area we do comply with is coastal zone management,
2 so whenever we have a coastal zone issue we are
3 reviewed by the state Clean Water Act. There is
4 state oversight in that, and probably the biggest
5 one that impacts this project is the state
6 historic preservation officer reviews all of the
7 proposals -- since all of Sandy Hook is a historic
8 site, state historic preservation office has
9 oversight over virtually anything that we propose
10 to do out here.

11 So there is a significant amount of
12 state oversight on our activities here at Sandy
13 Hook.

14 GREG: The next question says: "Why
15 aren't the proposals received for the development
16 available?"

17 MR. VOICE: First of all, I want to
18 thank everyone who is showing up here, and
19 spending a Saturday afternoon and into Saturday
20 evening, and representing Marie Russ, the regional
21 director, I just want to say it is an incredible
22 sense of commitment from the community that
23 there's this much interest in this project, and
24 whichever way this goes, we greatly appreciate the
25 interest of the community in the -- in what goes

1 on in Fort Hancock and Sandy Hook and the rest of
2 the northeast region.

3 The proposal for all the 20 some
4 proposals that were received were evaluated, you
5 saw the names of the team. I led the team. The
6 team that evaluated the proposals came from all
7 over the northeast region and from our Washington
8 office.

9 We had a very senior team of folks,
10 including two consultants, one from the Wharton
11 School, Bill Alexander, who provided us with
12 financial analysis of the proposals, and one from
13 the -- from our solicitors office. They were not
14 voting members of the team, but they participated
15 in our process, which took several weeks,
16 including interviews with the short list, and,
17 then, eventually a recommendation to the regional
18 director.

19 That process, we believe, was done in a
20 very professional way, and we have done selection
21 processes such as this for projects at the
22 Presidio, at various national parks, at the Grand
23 Canyon. The leasing program has been successful
24 in many places.

25 The debate here at Fort Hancock, as at

1 other sites, we tried to focus on the merits of
2 the proposal that we have selected, and how the
3 public perceives the impacts and the advantages
4 and disadvantages of that proposal for the site.
5 We didn't want this debate to get into a
6 discussion of which of the other 22 would have
7 been, you know, why didn't we pick one of the
8 other 22, we had a very disciplined process, and
9 that process led us to the two teams that we ended
10 up selecting.

11 At this point, because there has been
12 requests from the Congressman and there has been
13 concerns raised over what are the other 22, we are
14 going to release them, or as was explained
15 earlier, we are going to release them when we get
16 permission from each of the developers to release
17 them. And there's a process that we need to go
18 through and have signed -- and have signatures
19 saying we are authorized to release them.

20 So we are in the process of getting
21 them out. Mr. Wassel has already agreed to
22 release his, it's out to the Congressman and a
23 couple members of the press, and there's a
24 Xeroxing delay here, we are going to have to make
25 copies, and make it available, and we are doing

1 that as quickly as we can, as well as the American
2 Littoral Society has agreed to have their proposal
3 released. So the two proposals that we have
4 accepted are now in a sense released to the press
5 and to the Congressman, and we will get it out to
6 as many members of the public, and there will have
7 to be some sort of copying charge, but we are
8 releasing those.

9 And as we get permission from the other
10 20 odd proposals, we will release them, also.

11 We are trying to do this expeditiously,
12 because we know you're interested, and we are
13 interested in getting it out to you now because we
14 have decided to do that and to move it along.

15 GREG: Okay. The next question is:
16 "Who will be responsible for landscaping at the
17 Fort?"

18 I think we need to get through the
19 questions first.

20 MR. VOICE: We will let the landscape
21 architect handle that question.

22 MR. VOICE: Historical landscape
23 architect.

24 The National Park Service has done many
25 years of analysis of the historic landscape here.

1 We have four research projects that have been
2 completed on the character of the historic
3 landscape, and that character will be restored.
4 The plan would include the replanting of 150
5 missing trees, quite a few hedges throughout Fort
6 Hancock.

7 There will be a tremendous amount of
8 additional landscaping, shrubbery and trees that
9 you don't see today.

10 The National Park Service will continue
11 to have the responsibility to maintain the
12 landscape here. The landscape is not part of the
13 lease -- of the proposed lease. The landscape
14 will continue to be open to the public and
15 maintained and managed by the National Park
16 Service.

17 GREG: The next question is: "Why
18 doesn't Congress fund this?"

19 MR. VOICE: Well, that's actually a
20 good question.

21 The National Park Service,
22 unfortunately, has an enormous backlog, over four
23 and a half billion dollars of work that needs to
24 be done, and that Congress has been very generous
25 with the National Park Service, but it is an

1 enormous task.

2 The Park Service has expanded, it has
3 many military bases that have been surplused by
4 the military, such as Sandy Hook, such as Fort
5 Hancock, and they are all over the country, and
6 there is a huge backlog.

7 Back in 1980 is when this approach to
8 partnershiping was first established. I was
9 under Jimmy Carter. This has no party
10 affiliation. It was started, the debate started
11 under Jimmy Carter, went through Regan, Bush, and
12 Clinton and into Bush. It has nothing to do with
13 party affiliation. The concept of leasing
14 properties that are beyond the needs of the
15 National Park Service for administrative services
16 or for interpretation, yet are important to the
17 historic properties that we value, and in this
18 case it is a national landmark property, that
19 program was approached back in the 1980s, and we
20 have been discussing it since the 1980s in various
21 planning documents, and we are at that point now.

22 This program has been successfully
23 implemented since the 1980s at Cape Cod, at Valley
24 Forge, at Gettysburg, at Independence Park.
25 That's within our region, and there are other

1 sites within our region, as well as other parts of
2 the country, at Cuyahoga, at Chattahoochee, at the
3 Presidio in San Francisco, at Fort Baker in
4 Sausalito, at Yellowstone. There is a variety of
5 places where the National Park Service has
6 successfully leased property, the developer, or
7 the investor is restricted in very many ways from
8 doing anything that the National Park Service
9 wouldn't itself do; however, it has allowed us to
10 preserve historic buildings that are beyond the
11 needs of the National Park Service to use. And
12 that's the situation with our building here.

13 We don't have the required uses that
14 would generate possibly some Congressional
15 funding.

16 So we are leasing the buildings for
17 adaptive use and following a model that's been
18 followed in 30 or 40 national parks quite
19 successfully to get these buildings preserved, in
20 use and maintained, which is the hardest part of
21 getting these buildings back in use, which is even
22 with capital funds they become a burden on the
23 park to maintain them, unless there is some
24 ability to generate a revenue stream.

25 GREG: The next question is: "How will

1 the development affect traffic? In summer the
2 park is filled with cars and backs up onto Route
3 36."

4 MR. VOICE: For over two years, the
5 National Park Service has been working closely
6 with 13 local municipalities, agencies, the New
7 Jersey Department of Transportation, the Monmouth
8 County Transportation, Planning Board, and we have
9 developed a number of strategies to reduce the
10 traffic congestion on the approach roads to Sandy
11 Hook.

12 Those have been -- some of them have
13 been mentioned before, but the first effort is to
14 get information out to visitors who -- that
15 traffic congestion is heavy and that the park on
16 those approximately eight to ten days each summer,
17 where the park has to close because the 5,000
18 parking spaces are full, to get that information
19 out to approaching visitors in plenty of time so
20 that they have an opportunity to make other
21 choices, that they are not stuck on the Highlands
22 bridge. That will be through a number of means,
23 including radio transmissions and variable message
24 signs all along Route 36. We are doing that this
25 summer in cooperation with the New Jersey DOT.

1 We have also worked very closely with
2 the federal DOT and the New Jersey DOT on plans
3 for replacing the Highlands bridge.

4 There are two issues that affect
5 back-up of traffic on Route 36, and they are the
6 operating section of the bridge, as well as tolls
7 entering Sandy Hook.

8 The Park Service has actually used the
9 bridge in the past to assist us in closing the
10 gates when the parking lots are full, and when
11 that operating element is gone, a new strategy
12 will have to be developed to be able to close the
13 park in a safe way.

14 The Department of Transportation
15 currently has been doing a lot of traffic
16 planning, and it is currently working on plans
17 to replace, reconstruct our fee plaza as part of
18 the whole bridge replacement effort, so that the
19 two will work effectively together, and won't
20 continue to cause the kinds of back-ups that
21 everyone has lived with for so many years.

22 And then, again, because of the park
23 services lengthy commitment to not increasing
24 parking at Sandy Hook, the only way we will be
25 able to bring additional people to this park, to

1 make this park accessible to all the people who
2 have a right to be here, is through alternative
3 means of transportation, and hence we are building
4 the multi-use path next year that will connect
5 from the entrance of the park and eventually, with
6 the completion of the bridge, will connect to the
7 Henry Hudson Trail in Highlands, and will connect
8 immediately to the Sea Bright trail along the sea
9 wall, and it will -- and in the first phase, at
10 least, and here at Fort Hancock at the ferry dock
11 location.

12 So there will be a safe and effective
13 means of people arriving to the park by foot or by
14 bicycle.

15 And, finally, our efforts to construct
16 a year-round ferry dock that would accommodate
17 more than one ferry operator, thereby creating
18 competition and ideally driving down the price for
19 ferry access will again take a number of vehicles
20 off the road.

21 Those discussions are proceeding with
22 the local ferry operators to use their ferry
23 parking lots on weekends, which are along the bay
24 shore, which are currently under utilized, to
25 provide a park and sail opportunity to intercept

1 people coming from the north on 36 and get them
2 onto a boat into Sandy Hook rather than being
3 stuck in traffic jams.

4 So this is a very lengthy and well
5 thought-out effort, combined effort of many
6 entities that isn't going to stop this summer, it
7 is a process that is ongoing, and we will continue
8 to work very closely with those organizations to
9 address these problems.

10 I am reminded that there are some
11 characteristics of the traffic that will likely
12 result from the rehabilitation project at Fort
13 Hancock.

14 The majority of the uses here are, in
15 fact, day-time, weekday uses, education, and
16 office space, and those people will be coming here
17 weekdays from eight to five, and they will
18 actually be traveling against the flow of heavy
19 commuter traffic during those hours. And summer
20 weekends the -- as everybody around here knows,
21 the real problem with traffic entering, or trying
22 to enter the Hook is on -- as I said, is 8 to 10
23 summer weekend days, between 10 A.M. and 3 P.M.,
24 so that's not to minimize the problem, it is a
25 serious problem, but every effort is being made to

1 alleviate it in a cooperative way.

2 MR. VOICE: I just want to add one
3 little thing.

4 We did a fee adjustment -- was it last
5 summer or the summer before? Last summer, and we,
6 as part of that fee adjustment, we actually
7 dropped the cost of our summer season pass from
8 \$60 to \$50, and the year before that we just tried
9 to make the summer season pass easier to purchase,
10 and that resulted in us going from three summers
11 ago we sold 3500 season passes, and last year we

12 sold 825 summer season passes, and we can move
13 people through the fee area much more quickly with
14 a season pass. It is much like the EZ Pass, we
15 keep them rolling.

16 So we are looking at anything that we
17 can do to try to ease that traffic burden on, you
18 know, those beautiful summer weekends in, you
19 know, July and August.

20 GREG: "Does the park have the sewerage
21 capacity to handle the development?"

22 MR. VOICE: The park constructed a new
23 sewage treatment plant, a state of the art
24 treatment plant -- I'm sorry -- four, five years
25 ago, and it was specifically designed to be able

1 to carry the load of Fort Hancock. Since the plan
2 for rehabilitation and adaptive use of Fort
3 Hancock has been in the works for more than 25
4 years, it was clearly anticipated that these
5 buildings would be occupied in the future.

6 And so that that plant was designed to
7 accommodate the additional uses.

8 One of the options offered in the plan,
9 and still open for public comment and review, is
10 the idea of using tertiary treated effluent for
11 irrigation purposes, to actually be recharging
12 that water into the environment rather than into
13 retention ponds.

14 MR. VOICE: The gentlemen mentioned
15 earlier, we certainly will be using low-flow
16 toilets and every other environmental way that we
17 can conserve water as part of this project.

18 MR. VOICE: You just seem to be
19 enjoying the sewage treatment plant so much.

20 MR. VOICE: It is quite an operation
21 that we have.

22 GREG: "How will the town of Highlands
23 be compensated for additional noise and traffic?"

24 MR. VOICE: Well, there's no -- I
25 mean, to just answer the question bluntly, there's

1 no plan to compensate Highlands. There are many
2 folks in Highlands that support the project, and
3 look forward to the restoration of the Fort here.

4 We continue to work along the lines
5 that Richard spoke about, to alleviate traffic
6 problems. Again, most of those problems are
7 summer problems, on weekends, and we are taking
8 every step we can to work with the communities, as
9 Richard pointed out, working with 13 local
10 communities over the past years to try to address
11 that problem, and we continue to work with them on
12 the Highlands Bridge project, which we -- which
13 Richard's group has made a number of really great
14 suggestions, such as looking at reversible lanes,
15 and having a very easy-to-use turn-around lane so
16 the summer traffic that hits Sandy Hook and can't
17 come into the park can easily turn around, which
18 they just can't do now.

19 MR. VOICE: And many business leaders
20 in Highlands have indicated to us that they
21 believe the rehabilitation at Fort Hancock will
22 actually be advantageous to the town because of
23 greater foot traffic, and greater commercial
24 activities within the town.

25 GREG: "What is the long-range plan for

1 the entire Fort area, who is responsible for it,
2 and how will it relate to the development plan?"

3 MR. VOICE: There are 97 usable
4 buildings in Fort Hancock. The park services had
5 quite a bit of success over the last 30 years with
6 other government agencies and private institutions
7 in rehabilitating 20 of those 97 buildings.

8 The Park Service occupies and uses 40
9 buildings within the Hook, and of those I think
10 five are normally open to the public. Many of
11 those are used by park employees as residences,
12 because we provide all the municipal services
13 here, in terms of police and fire protection, road
14 maintenance, snow removal, water and sewer
15 treatment, and so quite a number of the park
16 employees have to live in the park to provide
17 those services.

18 We anticipate, as additional revenues
19 come to the park through the leasing program, that
20 a number of those 40 buildings which are currently
21 under utilized can be rehabilitated and put into
22 additional public use. And that leaves the
23 remaining 37 buildings, which will be covered by
24 the two proposed leases. And I think it is
25 interesting to note that out of those 36

1 buildings, which are all, frankly, except for the
2 house that I live in, vacant and unoccupied, about
3 12 of those buildings will for the first time ever
4 be open to the public. So there will be a
5 tremendous effect on the public use of Fort
6 Hancock in that many, many more of the historic
7 structures will be open and available to the
8 public.

9 And, as was mentioned earlier, the
10 lands belong to the American people, they will
11 continue to belong to the American people, and
12 will be managed by the National Park Service.
13 There will be no restriction on public use of the
14 lands of Fort Hancock or Sandy Hook.

15 GREG: "What is the set aside for
16 maintenance of the leased buildings?"

17 MR. VOICE: The set aside for the
18 maintenance of the leased buildings?

19 MR. VOICE: I guess --

20 MR. VOICE: I can take it.

21 I think what we are aimed at here is
22 that there is structured in the lease what we call
23 a fee in lieu of taxes, which reimburses us for --
24 for the services that Richard mentioned, for the
25 police services, the fire services, plowing the

1 roads in the winter, upkeep of the roads in the
2 summer. They are billed separately for water and
3 sewage, but the buildings themselves, the
4 maintenance of the buildings themselves are the
5 responsibility of the tenant, of the Sandy Hook
6 Partners and the American Littoral Society in
7 their case.

8 The lease puts them -- that's one of
9 the best things about it, even if we were to
10 get -- even if we had federal monies to restore
11 the buildings, they would quickly start to
12 deteriorate again. We need people in them to heat
13 them during the winters, the taxing winters that
14 we have out here, and to keep up with, you know,
15 the everyday upkeep of the buildings, and the
16 lease will provide that, and it will provide a
17 return to us to take care of all the other
18 services which the National Park Service will
19 provide out here, and which we need to provide to
20 some degree anyway.

21 Is the person here that asked that
22 question?

23 Okay. Well, I hope that was the answer
24 that they were looking for.

25 GREG: "What will happen to the gun

1 batteries?"

2 MR. VOICE: One of the most important
3 historical aspects of Fort Hancock and Sandy Hook
4 are the gun batteries, because it is the entire
5 history of the defense of our nation's coast lines
6 right here, and, as you all know, most, the vast
7 majority of those gun batteries are in pretty
8 terrible shape.

9 We have had a little bit of success in
10 working on them, and last summer Battery Gunnison
11 was reopened to the public after a project to
12 correct its safety hazards. The National Park
13 Service currently has a project in our competitive
14 funding system for \$600,000 to correct safety
15 hazards on four additional gun batteries, but,
16 perhaps, most important to us about the leasing
17 program is that it will, in addition to providing
18 the -- the payments in lieu of taxes, that will
19 help our operations, it will provide annual
20 revenue that will enable us to make additional
21 improvements, natural environmental enhancement
22 projects, as well as restoring many of the other
23 very significant historic structures at Sandy Hook
24 that are not -- that far exceed the 97 useful
25 buildings in Fort Hancock.

1 GREG: "Why is the lease 60 years?"

2 MR. VOICE: In order to take advantage
3 of the historic tax credits provided by the
4 Historic Preservation Act of 1980, and subsequent
5 amendments, the -- tax acts of 1986, I stand
6 corrected on part of that, generally speaking, to
7 get that 20 percent historic tax credit, which
8 some speaker here recognized is, you know, the big
9 tool that the federal government uses to attract
10 people, to interest people to take on these
11 difficult projects, generally the lease has to
12 exceed 39 years and some months in length.

13 To negotiate a historic lease that
14 allows the developer to get that tax credit, we
15 are talking about a 40-year lease to begin with.

16 Then, as several people recognized in
17 their comments, there is a tremendous expense to
18 restoring the buildings out here, upwards of \$60
19 million, and so the lease was negotiated with a
20 fair length commensurate with the return that
21 would be needed to payoff the loans to undertake
22 this project.

23 MR. VOICE: Just one other point on
24 that.

25 The implementing regulations for the

1 National Historic Preservation Act amendments that
2 provided for leasing set the term of the -- the
3 maximum term of the lease at 60 years.

4 MR. VOICE: I want to add something to
5 that.

6 You know, somebody asked me a question
7 outside, and I answered, you know, when the
8 government is going to give that tax incentive,
9 they don't want people to come in, restore a
10 building, take the tax incentive and run. They
11 want to be assured that that person is going to be
12 there caring for that building over the long run,
13 and that's one of the reasons it is structured
14 that way.

15 GREG: And the next question is: "What
16 contractual basis is there for default?"

17 MR. VOICE: Well, we are in the
18 process of making almost all the leases available
19 to the public, and all the default provisions are
20 in the lease will -- everybody is welcome to
21 review them, there are numerous default provisions
22 in the lease.

23 MR. VOICE: The lease that we are
24 making available is a draft of the lease, and
25 until a lease is signed, obviously everything can

1 change, and that was one of our reasons of being
2 hesitant about releasing it, is that we are not
3 signing a lease, obviously, until the public
4 review process is over, and, at that point, the
5 regional director will make a decision about the
6 direction that the project is going.

7 If the project is given a green light,
8 the discussion with the Sandy Hook Partners will
9 then continue, and we will -- they will seek their
10 financing, we will then have a signed lease to
11 deal with.

12 So the lease that we are releasing to
13 the public as of today is a draft lease, and it is
14 not all locked in yet.

15 GREG: The next question is: "Are
16 there periodic reviews for performance?"

17 MR. VOICE: There are periodic reviews
18 for performance, and they are annually.

19 GREG: Thank you.

20 "What happens if financial projections
21 of the project are not met?"

22 MR. VOICE: The developer has the
23 risk. We are assuming that between the skills
24 that Jim Wassel brings to the table, and the
25 skills that his financial sources will bring to

1 the table, that the conditions will be met, and
2 that the development will be successful.

3 If it's not successful, the burden is
4 on the developer. And also our consultants from
5 the Wharton School advised us that it seems like a
6 sound evaluation that they've done.

7 GREG: "What were the criteria for
8 selection?"

9 MR. VOICE: The criteria are all
10 listed in the RFP.

11 I believe they all have been made
12 public.

13 MR. VOICE: (Inaudible).

14 MR. VOICE: They were on the screen
15 before, and they have been -- the whole RFP is
16 public information.

17 We can provide it again. If anyone
18 wants an additional copy of the RFP, we can
19 provide it.

20 GREG: Okay. I think we are going to
21 close, but I just wanted to thank you, on behalf
22 of the regional director, I want to thank you on
23 behalf of Gateway National Recreational Area and
24 certainly the Sandy Hook unit for attending. We
25 really appreciate your interest.

1 (Applause.)

2 GREG: Just so you know, as you are
3 leaving, I was asked to remind you, Richard typed
4 this up for me so I should read it, if you
5 received a mailing from the park in the last two
6 months, you are on the mailing list. If you would
7 like to be placed on the mailing list, please
8 write your name and address on the comment sheet
9 in the back of the theater.

10 And I believe everybody knows they can
11 send their comments to the Superintendent care of
12 post office box 530 here at Fort Hancock, and
13 since nobody is listening, have a safe ride home.

14 (Whereupon the proceedings were
15 concluded.)

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

